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ABSTRACT

In response to a gap in the literature on student development with respect to the role of the family, and anecdotal evidence that the family's influence on the college student's development is profound, a review of the relevant literature on higher education, social psychology, psychiatry, sociology of the family, and family therapy was undertaken. The review is organized in terms of entry, attendance, and post-graduation with review of the studies in each are guided by six systemic assumptions that emphasize the dynamic, reciprocal character of adolescent-family relations. The following four themes gained prominance in the process of the monograph: (1) developmental influences are not limited to the university campus but extend to include the role of parents and siblings; (2) university entry is not universally accessible but mediated by a range of class-related variables, chief among them parental attitudes, values and expectations; (3) variation in parental socialization practices help account for systematic gender differences with cross-sex and same-sex parent-adolescent relations relevant to divergent dimensions of student behavior; and (4) various forms of social pathology among university students can frequently be traced to ongoing patterns of dysfunctional family interaction. Included are over 175 references and a supplementary bibliography of nearly 200 references. (JB)

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STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY SYSTEMS:
CRITICAL REVIEW AND IMPLICATIONS
FOR THEORY AND PRACTICE

by

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c 1988

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The student development literature is currently characterized by a paradox. On the one hand, formal attention to the developmental influence of the family is minimal. On the other hand, abundant anecdotal evidence suggests that student service professionals are operationally aware that the family has an extremely potent influence on students attending university. The disparity between these views suggests the need for a review of the available literature, both to resolve the matter in question and to compensate for the fact that no such review is currently available.

Towards these ends, a review of the research literature was initiated encompassing **five** substantive areas, namely, higher education, social psychology, psychiatry, sociology of the family, and family therapy. The substantial data thus acquired was then organized in a manner consistent with a university student's career path, that is, in terms of **entry, attendance**, and **postgraduation**. Review of studies in each area was further guided by **six** systemic assumptions. The thrust of these assumptions was to emphasize the dynamic, reciprocal character of adolescent-family relations, and thus move away from the decontextualized individual so prominent in current developmental theory.

Studies pertinent to the entry phase were divided into three sets having to do, respectively, with **general concerns, specific concerns** and **status aspiration**. The focus of data related to general concerns was to debunk prevalent stereotypes concerning adolescence in general and adolescent-parents relations in particular. This showed that adolescent development may involve several different pathways, such that adolescent turmoil is by no means invariant. This also demonstrated that relations between adolescents and their parents are typically cordial, with parents and peers having influence in different areas, and thus not in competition or conflict with each other. The importance of historical periods and cultural influences on adolescent development was also noted.

As for specific concerns, studies were reviewed touching on such varied topics as self-concept, perception of parents, high school academic achievement, moral development and adolescent pathology. In each case, the potent influence of parent-adolescent interaction was noted.

Finally, studies relating to status aspiration were reviewed. This area of study concerns those variables which predict whether or not high school students will seek postgraduate education. At the entry phase, four variables stood out as critically important: socioeconomic status (SES), mental ability, academic achievement and parental influence. Further, none of these variables operate in isolation; rather, they are interdependent.

The next career phase was that of attendance. Here, relevant studies were divided into four categories respectively concerning **attendance, adjustment, return**, and **social pathology**. Studies specific to attendance explored the predictive validity of formulations concerning status aspiration. This confirmed that family variables not only predict who will want to go on to university, but also who does in fact attend university.

Next, studies concerned with adjustment showed that family processes are not only relevant to student adjustment in general, but also touch importantly on such specific aspects of student conduct

as vocational values, social competence, stress management, commuting, political ideology, aggression and retention.

Family relations, especially marital interaction, emerged as central to the next area of inquiry, namely, return to university by non-traditional age students.

Finally, family interaction again emerged as critical to various aspects of student social pathology, including neurosis, depression, loneliness, alcohol and drug use, crisis reaction, and family dysfunction. The practical utility of family therapy as opposed to individual counselling is also explored.

The final phase of the student career path is, of course, postgraduation. Here, available studies were few in number and substantively quite scattered. Nevertheless, what data are available suggest that family processes continue to play an influential but attenuated role, especially given the likely involvement of the student's marital partner and their joint offspring.

As the monograph unfolds, four themes gain increasing prominence:

1. developmental influences are not limited to the university campus; rather they extend to include the role of parents and siblings whose influence cannot be overemphasized;
2. university entry is not universally accessible; rather, such access is mediated by a range of class-related variables, chief among them parental attitudes, values and expectations, with the offspring of middle- and upper-class parents disproportionately represented among university student populations;
3. variation in parental socialization practices, both within and between families, help account for systematic gender differences, with cross-sex and same-sex parent-adolescent relations relevant to divergent dimensions of student behaviour; and,
4. various forms of social pathology among university students can frequently (although not exclusively) be traced to on-going patterns of dysfunctional family interaction.

Finally, after each major section and at the conclusion of the review, the implications of these data are explored in detail for two reader groups, namely, developmental theorists and researchers on the one hand, and student service professions on the other. With regard to the latter, specific reference is made to advising, curriculum planning, career and vocational counselling, placement services, residence life, and personal counselling. In both instances, the thrust of the discussion to accent the need to attend to and include family interaction processes as relevant to both developmental theory and practice.

In addition to an extensive bibliography based on studies cited in the text, an equally large Supplementary Bibliography is included.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, student development theory has moved from the periphery to the centre of student services across North America (Rodgers, 1980; Gregory & Ballou, 1986; Benjamin, 1986). This is so much the case that Bloland (1986) has recently characterized such theory as the "new orthodoxy". This is intended to suggest that while its acceptance is nearly universal, this is all too often uncritical and unmindful.

This is ironic in the extreme, for at least in one context - the role of family systems in student development - the relationship between theory and practice has become increasingly paradoxical.

On the one hand, extant theories of student development have traditionally fostered twin orientations towards students. First, they have conceptualized the student (singular) as the primary unit of analysis such that any and all causal forces are seen to converge on the individual. Second, they have focused attention exclusively on events and processes which pertain to and occur on the university or college campus; events, processes and persons which occur or reside off-campus are excluded from analysis. Both orientations hold across all types of theory, whether their focus is cognitive (eg. Piaget; Kohlberg; Perry; Loevinger), person-environment interaction (eg. Barker; Holland; Stein) or psychosocial (Erickson; Gould; Levinson; Heath). For example, of the latter, Chickering's (1969) vector of "independence" suggests that "healthy" adolescent development requires the steady attenuation of parental influence. It follows that on-going interaction between parents and their student offspring may be safely ignored, as if they had in practice ceased to have any developmental significance.

On the other hand, student service practitioners have long recognized the on-going influence of family relations on student behaviour and, by inference at least, on student development. This insight is typically shared as anecdotal evidence. This includes for example, the importance of including families in freshman orientation programs or the alacrity with which parents complain should their sons or daughter espouse values parents do not share or behave in ways they do not recognize.

Such experience is typically represented obliquely in the literature. For example, Goodyear (1980) comments on the "linear" approach of most personal counsellors. Pascarella (1984, 1985) complains that previous studies of on-campus student life have been too limited, while Openlander and Searight (1983) observe that the role of the family has been noted infrequently in the development literature.

That studies concerning the impact of family relations on student develop are largely absent from the development literature is an impression widely accepted. It is both true and not true.

It is true in at least three senses. First, with rare exceptions (eg. DeCoster & Mable, 1981), references to the family in the student development literature per se are indeed relatively scarce. Second, authors within higher education make frequent reference to family systems in a background or residual sense, so that little of substance concerning family process is explored. The extensive literature concerning student attrition and retention (Bean & Creswell, 1980; Bean, 1985; Lenning et al., 1980; Tinto, 1975; Pettigrew & Auger, 1986) is a case in point, for, with few exceptions (see Tinto,

1987), reference to family systems is restricted to concern for a few demographic indicators (eg. father's income and education). The same applies to studies of student satisfaction (DeVore, 1983).

Finally, when substantive family data are reported, this is seldom obvious in the title, considerably hampering efforts at bibliographic search. Consider the following brief quotations.

> In his annual address, the president of a state teachers college used to describe letters that he had received from distressed parents complaining that while their Billy had seemed normal enough when he went away to college for an education, something had happened to him; he had little in common with his parents anymore.
>
> There is hardly a chapter in this book that does not make some reference to the student's family, as the "cradle of personality" and as either a reference of college impacts or a source of cross-pressure vis-a-vis the college.

The first quote is from Corwin (1965) in a sociology of education text. Corwin does not pursue this clear hint at the impact of college life on both student and family; his interests lie elsewhere. The second quote is taken from Komarovsky (1985), a work that contains a wealth of information about reciprocal relations between students and family systems. The title ("Women in College: Shaping Their Feminine Identities"), however, offers no hint of this. Rather, reference to "identity" suggests to me that the work continues the traditional emphasis on the individual. More importantly, this is representative of the literature at large.

Taken together, anecdotal reports of student service professionals, sporadic hints in the literature and my own critique of the developmental literature (Benjamin, 1986) converge to suggest that: (1) the on-going impact of family relations on the development of college and university students may be extremely potent; (2) the current tendency to ignore this relationship in the theoretical and student service literatures represents a serious deficiency; and (3) a critical review of the available literature for the purpose of filling in this apparent lacunae is both timely and important. The present paper seeks to redress this need. In mounting this review, I accept the simultaneous challenge of speaking about this issue to the two divergent audiences who have a vested interest in it, namely, theoreticians and researchers, and student service professionals. It is a "challenge" in two senses. At present, despite the common rhetoric of "development theory", both groups rely on different languages of discourse, have divergent day-to-day concerns, and pursue quite different goals and objectives. As important, there is very little cross-fertilization between these groups since they seldom, if ever, talk directly with and to each other. Consequently, my exploration of the role of family systems will involve quite different concerns with respect to each of these audiences. Before describing these divergent concerns, a brief methodological digression seems in order.

Method

Effort to implement a standard bibliographic search in this area proved fruitless. For example, computer search of the ERIC files, by keyword, yielded some 38 references all of which used the

descriptor "family" in a residual sense, free of substantive content. Further inspection revealed that confining the search to the student development or even the student service literatures would be unprofitable. Consequently, the strategy employed was to use snowball sampling of **five** literatures, each broadly defined: **higher education, social psychology, psychiatry, sociology of the family, and family therapy.** The rich results, while fragmented and typically unsystematic, revealed that the belief that the relationship between family systems and university or college students has not been studied was specious.

Organization of these data will distinguish between three phases in the career path of university or college students, namely, **entry, attendance and postgraduation.** "Entry" will be encompass events and processes in the five or so years which precede entry into university and which are now typically subsumed under the residual title "student background information". "Attendance" will refer to events and processes which occur while students are enroled in a university or college (irrespective of the duration of their stay) and actively pursuing studies with the intention of graduating with a degree, certificate or diploma. Finally, "postgraduation" will refer to life events and processes in the five or so years following graduation, with special reference to marriage and/or employment.

Initially, I had intended to rely solely on primary references. However, the body of available literature was substantial in some areas. Accordingly, the present review will rely **both** on primary reports as well as a variety of review articles.

Theory and Research

Above, I noted that most developmental theorists and researchers currently rely on the individual as unit of analysis and/or the campus as the locus of observation. Following my own critique (Benjamin, 1986), I reject both orientations. Instead, the analysis to follow will rest on a series of **six** alternative assumptions:

1. **Relations between students and their parents and siblings are in principle reciprocal,** such that it is just as fruitful to ask how students affect their parents as to wonder how family processes affect student development. Indeed, the two questions may point to an iterative or recursive arrangement in which students affect parents who affect their student offspring, who affect their parents, and so on, in an endless loop, limited only by the continued interaction among the participants.
2. **The salience of events on- or off-campus cannot be determined a priori,** by theoretical fiat. Rather, their significance is an empirical matter, often as a function of, among other things, the character and quality of the relationship between parents and their student offspring.
3. **The character of the relationship between families and students is not static.** Rather, that relationship itself has a developmental trajectory, and is subject to transformation over the course of students' university career. It follows that the relationship between families and students be conceptualized in analogic rather than digital terms, that is, it will involve shifts in degrees of involvement rather than be "on" or "off". The same logic applies as students become involved in other familial relationships (eg. marriage), such that sources of familial

influence tend to multiply rather than shift entirely from one source (eg. parents) to another (eg. spouse, children).

4. **The relationship between families and students is, in principle, on-going.** This will involve some combination of processes at three levels of abstraction, namely, meaning, affect and behaviour (see Benjamin, 1983). It follows that the relationship between families and students may remain potent even when face-to-face interaction may be infrequent - as in students living in residence - as a function of continuing involvement on the levels of meaning and affect. Indeed, since relations between families and students necessarily pre-date university or college entrance, it seems reasonable to expect that family influences are prepotent initially and may or may not attenuate through time. Thus, for some students, the university may be a central developmental influence; for others the on-going influence of the family may be such as to nullify the developmental impact of the university experience (see Tinto, 1987).

5. From the above, **it follows that the appropriate unit of analysis is not the isolated "individual".** Rather, it is the system of the individual plus one or more significant others plus the larger social and/or physical environment plus the rules (ie., the interactional regularities) which specify the relations among these components plus the rules to change the rules in the face of internal and/or external change (ie., the metarules). To focus exclusively on the "individual" in isolation from the social context of which they are of necessity a part is, to use Bateson's (1972) evocative phrase, to "chop up the ecology", that is, to attend to the part while ignoring the larger whole or context apart from which the individual's behaviour is rendered meaningless.[1]

6. **This implies that study of either the learning environment or "student" development initially requires specification of the system to be explained,** with the "individual" (as system), the family, the peer group, student-faculty relations (and so on) or some combination of the above (ie., some suprasystem) each appropriate for and illustrative of certain sets of operations and/or processes which regularly occur during the career of university students.

This incomplete list of assumptions, while generally supported by family systems theory (Benjamin, 1983, 1986), have yet to receive systematic assessment with university populations. Consequently, their relevance for the present paper will be more as background hypotheses than as an established theoretical framework. For this reason, I will return to them in the final section of this

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[1] *From this perspective, the "individual" (as system) is not a unified or singular entity, but rather a set of parts* ***plus*** *a set of social and physical environmental "others" (ie., a context)* ***plus*** *a set of rules which specify their internal and external relations - an organization which defines "mind" or mentality or thought in Bateson's sense (Bateson, 1980; Bateson & Bateson, 1987) -* ***plus*** *a set of rules for changing the rules in the face of external or internal change. Furthermore, in many instances, one system (say, the family* ***plus*** *the rules for relations among its members) may become part of (ie., represented in) another system (say, the "individual"). Thus, an individual may interact with others in a university setting using the same rules as apply in relations among members of his or her own family. This implies that some forms of individual maladaptive or dysfunctional behaviour may derive from either the failure of error activation or the presence of inadequate or incomplete rules for changing the rules or both, with radical implications for intervention.*

paper where I consider the implications of this assumptive framework in particular and this review in general, for the future course of both theory and research regarding student development.

Practice

Concern over assumptive framework is relevant to theorists and researchers given the abstract character of the work that they do. In contrast, the concerns of student service professionals tend to be pragmatic in character, having to do with identification of the necessary tasks and selection of the best methods for achieving these ends. Indeed, I suspect that the appeal of student development theory has been the ease with which its tenets can be translated into practical activity.

The thrust of the present work will not be to dispense with student development theory. Rather, it will be to amend it in such a way as to suggest that awareness of and sensitivity to family processes will assist service staff in (1) the identification of developmentally relevant tasks and objectives, and (2) the selection of programmatic methods for their achievement.

In this context, it should be noted that student service divisions in North American universities and colleges encompass an extremely wide range of subspecialties. Knowledge concerning family processes will be relevant to all of them, but in varying degrees. Consequently, the derivation of practice implications will concentrate on six areas of student service: **admissions, curriculum planning, career and vocational counselling, placement services, residence life, and personal counselling.** Brief mention of the central concerns of professionals in each of these areas will clarify the character of the discussion to follow.

Admissions. In an age of fiscal constraint, admissions staff have of necessity had to shoulder an increasingly onerous burden as they seek to attract students to university. How this might best be accomplished, towards whom they should target their energy and resources,and by what specific means, remain central concerns for these service specialists.

Curriculum Planning. Having attracted students to university, what substantive material should they be taught and how best might this be done in accord with a series of developmental objectives. It follows that as one's conception of the developmental tasks at hand change, so change is equally likely as regards course structure and classroom activity.

Career and Vocational Counselling. As North American university students become increasing pragmatic in what they seek to get out of a university education, so the role of career and vocational counselling staff become increasingly important. How to best assess students interests, needs and capacities, when might this best be done, and how might the resulting data best be conveyed to students seeking assistance, are key concerns.

Placement Services. A natural extension of these concerns applies to placement professionals whose task it is to match students with jobs. Here, the concern with how this might best be accomplished encompasses an interest in how students now typically go about finding work. Increasing the span of such information can only make the tasks of placement staff that much easier.

Residences. During the first two years of university, in many institutions across North American, a significant proportion of students will live in residence. There is ample data now available which attests to the significant impact that that experience can have for student development (see Benjamin, 1986). In turn, these data call attention to the central importance of the tasks assigned to residence life staff. These include such concerns as who should live in residence and who should not, how should students be matched in rooms designed for two or more, what can be done when roommate matching fails, and what is the most appropriate response to student antisocial behaviour.

Personal Counselling. Only a small proportion of students in any given university will typically seek assistance from a personal counsellor. Yet no one seriously disputes the central place of personal counselling, for the students that do seek assistance will often be unable to continue without it. This said, the place of counselling remains ambiguous legally now that the principle of "in loco parentis" has been abandoned. Thus, the concerns of personal counselling staff include their legal status, the sorts of expertise they require to meet the range of problems they are likely to encounter, and how best to think about student problems in order that counselling staff be most helpful to their clients.

Overview

In what follows, the exploration of available data will be divided into four sections. The first three will correspond to the student career phases of entry, attendance and postgraduation. Following each, relevant theory and practice issues will be briefly discussed. The final section will explore the implications of this body of work for developmental theory, institutional research, and the six areas of practice noted immediately above.

Throughout, discussion will be guided by four principle themes:

1. On-going family interaction processes remain potent sources of developmental influence, especially as regards social relations on-campus.
2. The economic and social structure of North American society impose constraints which systematically limit who will and who will not attend institutions of higher education.
3. Patterns of social relating among university students will display gender-specific patterns whose origin can be traced to family processes.
4. Of those students who encounter serious difficulties at some time during their university career, a significant proportion will report problems that are rooted in dysfunctional patterns of family interaction.

ENTRY

Of the three phases into which I have broken the student career, the entry phase has received the most attention in the literature. To simplify review, discussion of the entry phase will be examined in terms of general concerns, specific concerns, and status aspiration. The first two areas are indirectly

relevant to higher education, serving to establish the salience of the family system for concurrent and later adolescent development. The third area touches directly on university entry.

General Concerns

The import of the findings to be reported can only be fully appreciated in the context of the assumptions which have come to be accepted as conventional wisdom among theorists and practitioners within psychology and psychiatry. The seminal work of Hall (1904) and later Anna Freud (1946) have led to widespread acceptance of the following beliefs:

1. Adversity early in life is the immediate cause of varying degrees of dysfunction in adolescence;
2. Mid-to-late adolescence is invariably a period of turmoil characterized by an identity crisis and anxiety associated with the processes of separation and individuation;
3. Relations between adolescents and their parents tend to involve on-going conflict and emotional distance, a process often characterized as a "generation gap" and exemplified by gross divergence in values and attitudes;
4. At the same time, as adolescents move away from their parents, they simultaneously move towards their peers, adopting values and attitudes consistent with the peer culture of which they are a part; indeed, some hold that peers attachments necessarily precede separation from parents.

Subjected to empirical test, these assumptions have all proven either incomplete, simplistic or simply false. Further, data have accumulated which call attention to additional issues heretofore omitted from most treatments of parent-adolescent relations.

For example, recent reviews by Clarke (Clarke & Clarke, 1976; Clarke, 1984) and Benjamin (1980) concerning the influence of past events presents convincing evidence of the plasticity of human development. These data suggest both that cumulative deficits tend to arise only under conditions in which adversity tends to persist over long periods of time, and that under changed circumstances, past events tend to fade away in the face of on-going processes in the present. Indeed, even given the grimmest conceivable early circumstances, later intervention has often been shown to produce significantly accelerated development, rapidly achieving normative levels. Finkelhor (1984) has recently taken an identical position with respect to the long-term consequences of child sexual abuse. He adds that this tendency to impute causal significance to events in the distant past involves inappropriately imposing adult perceptions, expectations and interpretations on child and adolescent experiences (see also Offer & Sabshin, 1984).

The most potent of the various "changed circumstances" that have been shown to reverse the effects of early adversity involves the evolution of an adult-adolescent relationship characterized by love, respect, affection and support. An illustrative case in point is provided by Koluchova (1976 cited in Clarke & Clarke, 1976) who presents a rare case study of identical twins subjected to severe and

prolonged abuse from birth. At the time of their discovery at age seven, they had the appearance of three-year-olds. They were barely able to walk, had only rudimentary speech and both had a tested IQ of 40. Placed for adoption with a pair of middle-aged sisters who accepted them as "natural and loved children", over the next two years their IQ's jumped to within the normal range. Tested over a range of attributes, by age 15, they were in indistinguishable from the other teenagers with whom they went to high school.

Similarly, a series of reviews suggest that the expectation that turmoil and crisis are invariably associated with adolescent develop is not supported by evidence (Bengston & Troll, 1978; Belsky et al., 1984; Jurkovic & Ulrki, 1985). Reliable information on this matter is provided by Offer (1969; Offer & Offer, 1975; Offer et al., 1981; Offer & Sabshin, 1984) whose work now involves some 90 samples totally over 20,000 adolescents in five countries. Longitudinal in character, this work typically follows adolescents from the ages of 11 to 21 and covers a wide range of variables. In one study involving middle class white males in the United States, the results reveal not one, but three developmental pathways. "Continuous growth" boys faced no developmental crises whatever: development was smooth, untroubled and untraumatic. "Surgent growth" boys faced some hardship: parent-child conflict was in evidence, as was death, divorce and mental disorder; development took the form of a series of spurts. "Tumultuous growth" boys faced an unending series of crises: life for them was in all but continuous turmoil, with behaviourial and emotional patterns in evidence at mid-adolescence unaltered by age 21. Despite such variation, all three groups of boys evidenced social adjustment within the normal range using standard psychiatric criteria, with not more than 20% of any sample displaying clinically disturbed behaviour. Across samples, the authors note that there was surprisingly little cross-cultural variation.

Moreover, relations between these adolescents and their parents showed no evidence of a so-called "generation gap". Parents and adolescents often saw things in much the same terms and reported few major problems, with the vast majority well adjusted and coping adequately with their life problems. While few sex differences were found, it did appear that females more than males placed a high value on family relations, upheld high moral standards and were likely to deal with aggressive feelings by internalization rather than acting out. Further, the authors note in particular that parents were better able to accurately predict their child's self-image than were a group of mental health professionals.

Subsequent reviews not only confirm these findings, but display near unanimity in extending them as follows (Bengston & troll, 1978; Belsky et al., 1984; Jurkovic & Ulrki, 1985; Sabatelli & Mazor, 1985). The family is not only central in mediating between adolescent development and societal change, it is also crucial to identity formation, separation and individuation, and the establishment of socially determined life cycle markers. Moreover, the influence process is typically reciprocal, with parents influencing adolescents who subsequently influence parents, so that in some sense adolescents help shape their own development.

Such reciprocity accounts in part for the fact that sharp divergence in values and attitudes applies to less than 30% of families with adolescent children. Similarly, warmth, closeness and cordiality

characterized the majority of such families. This is not to say that parents and adolescents always perceive things similarly. Indeed, adolescents are likely to perceive their parents as more influential than they really are while parents tend to see their adolescent children as less influential than is really the case (see also Preto & Travis, 1985). As parents provide a critical bridge between their children and the worlds of work and education, so their children mediate between their parents and social and cultural change, a process of bilateral socialization Bengston and Troll (1978) have called "the fore-runner effect".

In this context, the role of peers and of parents' marital relationship should not be ignored. There is agreement here that efforts to distinguish between parents and peers on an either-or basis is seriously misleading. Rather, both sets of relations are influential, but differentially so. While adolescents do indeed spend more time with peers than parents (see Csikszentmihalyi et al., 1977), this does not appear to diminish the latter's influence; it is to their parents that adolescents go regarding future goals while it is their peers who are consulted concerning mundane matters (eg. school work, TV programs, fashion, etc.). In others words, the duration of contact is less important than the salience adolescents (and parents) attach to it. Furthermore, in both cases the degree of influence appears to be a function of the closeness of the relationship and thus the degree to which adolescents identify with these significant others. It is hardly surprising therefore that adolescents who are involved in family decision-making, whose relationship with their parents is perceived as close and supportive, and whose parents are seen to have a satisfying marital relationship tend to identify most with their parents and are thus most influenced by them. Indeed, such may extend to the selection of peer relations and to the resolution of peer problems. Conversely, families characterized by intense interpersonal conflict (parent-child and/or marital), parent-based decision-making, authoritarian forms of discipline, and parental dominance tend to be associated with adolescent dysfunctional behaviour (eg. drug or alcohol abuse). These difficulties may be further exacerbated when family processes and those which characterize the secondary school are in conflict (Green, 1985).

Finally, child age and sex, and the specific historical and cultural contexts of child behaviour all deserve brief mention. Within the context of a reciprocal parent-adolescent relationship, the adolescent's relative influence tends to increase with age, especially in families in which parent-child relations are harmonious. Similarly, males tend to be accorded greater autonomy than females, although this is qualified by the cross-sex basis of parental influence, a topic that I will discuss in the next subsection. This manner of describing parent-adolescent relations makes it reasonable to conclude that the patterns described above apply both cross-culturally and transhistorically. Both conclusions would be wrong. In this context, while interest in family history is relatively new - having emerged in the 1960's - the findings of this line of inquiry appear most important.[2] The work of Elder (1980), for example, suggests that not only does the age patterning of role transitions (eg. from adolescent to

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[2] *Elder (1980) reports that the notion of "adolescence" as a distinct and separate life stage was only invented at the end of the 19th century, an artifact, Jurkovic and Ulriki (1985) suggest, of industrialization.*

adult) change significantly across historical epochs, but that particular life events (eg. growing up during the Great Depression) can alter the life course of future generations (see also Livson & Peskin, 1980). Similarly, Modell et al. (1976 cited in Arnstein, 1984) studied five role transitions during the period 1880 to 1970. While there were fewer differences than they expected, they did conclude that modern adolescents are being forced to grow up (ie., make the transition to adulthood) more quickly, under the constraint of a broader array of normative standards, and with greater long term consequences over the life course than their counterparts in the past. Finally, family dynamics in general and the place of adolescents in the family in particular show significant cross-cultural variation. Coleman (1986), for example, reports that among Japanese families, adolescent development involves a shift from immature to mature passive dependence, especially in the mother-son dyad. Avoidance of overt emotional expression and reverence for family traditions are also typical. Thus, while relative separateness and horizontal integration characterizes North American families with adolescents, relative connectedness together with vertical integration is more typical of Japanese families.

Specific Concerns

Studies in this subsection are a logical extension of those reviewed immediately above. If "general" studies focus on the parent-adolescent relationship in generic terms, then "specific" studies concentrate on a variety of particular attributes of that relationship. In the present context, each of these attributes is relevant either to adolescent development and/or to educational achievement.

Adolescent Self-Concept. Several studies attend to family relations as they impact on adolescent self-concept. Leonardson (1986), for example, examined the relationship between self-concept and his subjects home life, their high school grade point average, and the intactness of their family. The respective correlations are 0.41, 0.47 and 0.22. All three together account for 46% of the explained variance, with personal variables better predictors of self-concept than academic variables.

Hoecter and Harper (1987) examined the relationship between self-concept and family support. Their findings suggest a strong relationship between the two, with degree of support related to father's education among girls only, that is, self-concept and support obtained in cross-sex parent-child relationships. In a similar vein, Miller (1976 cited in Talmadge & Ruback, 1985) found that adolescent self-esteem was directly related to maternal facilitative skills.

Grecas and Schwarze (1986) explored the relationship between adolescent self-esteem and adolescent perception of parental behaviour. Moreover, they distinguished between self-report and behaviourial perception, arguing that the two may not be the same. Their findings support this reasoning, for there was a low degree of congruence between adolescent self-report and adolescent perception of parental behaviour. Further, sex differences were large and consistent. The self-esteem of adolescent males appeared especially sensitive to parental behaviour concerned with control and autonomy whereas females were more concerned with parental support and participation. Moreover, adolescent self-esteem varied more as a function of the same-sexed rather than the opposite-sex parent,

that is, male adolescents were more sensitive to the perception of their fathers rather than their mothers.

Adolescent Perception. Two studies focused specifically on adolescents' perception of their parents. Analite (1980) compared the perception of high school students some of whom were judged delinquent, the others non-delinquent. The findings revealed that (1) delinquents were much more likely to perceive their parents negatively than non-delinquents, and (2) negative parental perception was associated with the impression that marital relations in their families were unsatisfying.

Sebald's (1986) historical approach compared adolescent's perception of their parents in surveys completed in 1963, 1976 and 1982. This revealed that adolescent's tendency to look to their parents for guidance appears to have decreased during the 1960's and 1970's and increased in the 1980's. Furthermore, whereas females tended to be parent-oriented, males tended to rely more on the views of their peers. Parental orientation by adolescents of either sex was associated with their parent's financial status (high), education (high) and career (high).

High School Under- and Overachievement. A number of studies have linked high school under- and overachievement with family relations. Shaw and White (1965), for example, found that academic achievement was associated with the degree of congruence between parent perceptions of adolescents and their own self-conceptions. While the authors found that adolescent identification was with the same-sexed parent, this pattern was most associated with academic underachievement.

Morrow and Wilson (1961) confined their study to high school males. This revealed that under- and overachievement were associated with specific patterns of family interaction. Overachievers tended to predominate in families characterized by parental support, interest, approval, understanding, the feeling of belonging and the perception of marital satisfaction. The result was a high degree of adolescent identification with their parents. In sharp contrast, underachievers were typical in families in which parents were domineering and restrictive, punishment was severe and frequent, pressure to achieve was high and the marital relationship was perceived as conflictual.

A later study by White (1976) and a review by Swift (1967) add further to the range of family processes associated with adolescent academic achievement. White (1976) found that underachievement among adolescent males was closely associated with father-son conflict. Conversely, Swift (1967) found that high achievement was positively associated with family socioeconomic status (high), family size (low, working class families only), father's occupation (high), family social mobility (upward), parental education (high) and parental attitudes towards education (sympathetic) (see also Prasad et al., 1979 cited in Talmadge & Ruback, 1985).

Epstein (1983) argues that the importance of family relations needs to be assessed in terms of their congruence with processes in the secondary school setting. That is, the author argues that there is a feedback relationship between the family, the school and the child's academic achievement. Indeed, he suggests that the degree of congruence is a stronger predictor of adolescent school achievement than family socioeconomic status.

Frey and Wendorf (1984) studied gifted high school students. In addition to confirming the importance of family problems - parental rejection, distance, father absence and marital problems - to underachievement, the authors also distinguished between non-problem, non-clinical and clinical families with gifted children. Adolescents from non-problem families were very successful. Adolescents from non-clinical but troubled families were "moderately healthy", while those from clinical families were "moderately dysfunctional". Clinical families were characterized by covert parent-child coalitions, poor problem-solving, severe marital conflict, and the combination of disengaged fathers with enmeshed or overinvolved mothers (see Minuchin, 1976).

Finally, Scott-Jones (1984) has provided the most recent review of this scattered literature. In addition to reaffirming the importance of the factors already noted above, he further highlights the central importance of family context for child academic achievement. Specifically, he draws attention to maternal language (restricted vs elaborated code) and teaching style, the influential role of paternal expectations and behaviour, the impact of the marital relationship on the parental behaviour of both spouses, the high degree of covariation between socioeconomic status and family interaction and, in particular, the "value stretch" characteristic of poor families. In this context, "value stretch" refers to the fact that poor and middle class families typically have similarly high aspirations for their children. In middle class families these aspirations are matched with equally high expectations regarding the likelihood of actual achievement. In poor families, these aspirations are frequently tempered by realistically low expectations, with the "stretch" referring to this discrepancy.

Family Size. Using aggregated data, Zajonc (1976, 1983; Zajonc & Markus, 1976; Zajonc et al., 1979) argues that family size, birth order and child spacing can predict child intellectual development. More specifically, he suggests that, controlling for social class, large families with closely spaced children will provide a less adequate "average intellectual environment" than smaller families with more widely spaced children.

Known as "confluence theory", it has generated considerable controversy in the social psychological literature. On the one hand, critics such as Galbraithe (1982) argue that the model is seriously flawed. Grotevant et al. (1977) provides support for this view. In their study, the model explained only 2% of the variance using individual (as opposed to aggregate) data. In contrast, Burbaum and Moreland (1980) were able to explain 51% of the variance in their study using individual data.

Quick resolution of this debate is probably unlikely, although confluence theory continues to get serious attention in the literature concerned with academic achievement (see Scott-Jones, 1984).

Moral Development. Following Kohlberg's (1976) model of moral development, a number of studies have sought to discover the origin of moral reasoning in children and adolescents in family processes. Holsten (1972), for example, demonstrated that children whose parents engage them in discussion and explanation show a more advanced degree of moral reasoning than children whose parent do not behave in this manner.

Hudgens and Prentice (1973) compared mother-son pairs in delinquent and non-delinquent families. They showed that (1) the moral reasoning of both sets of mothers was more advanced than that of their sons; (2) non-delinquent adolescents were more advanced than their delinquents counterparts; and (3) mothers of non-delinquents were more advanced than mothers of delinquents.

Jurkovich and Prentice (1974) further explored delinquent and non-delinquent mother-son pairs. In this case, differences between the two family types did not reach statistical significance, although the differences were in the predicted direction. More important, they found a significant mother x son interaction effect, with mothers exhibiting more advanced moral reasoning than their sons in both groups. Non-delinquent families were more likely than their delinquent counterparts to be characterized by low interpersonal conflict, low parental dominance or parent-child hostility and high interpersonal warmth.

Parikh (1980) explored moral reasoning among East Indian families. This confirmed that family processes were central to the evolution of moral reasoning. For example, the more advanced the reasoning of the parents, especially the mothers, the more advanced the reasoning of the children. Furthermore, older children were always more advanced than younger children. Moral reasoning, while independent of family structure (ie., family size), was closely associated with parental encouragement and induction or explanation.

Haan (1968) found that families in which there was much conflict tended to achieve, at most, the "conventional" stage of moral reasoning. By contrast, low conflict families could demonstrate moral reasoning at the stage of "principled reasoning". Similarly, Eisenberg-Berg and Mussen (1978) and Hoffman (1980) found that moral reasoning was associated with parental empathy, nonpunitiveness, nonrestrictiveness, egalitarianism and open communication. Feather (1980) takes such findings one step further, arguing that the importance of such findings is that they allows us to move "beyond Kohlberg's focus on prohibition-oriented reasoning" to account for the emergence of prosocial behaviour among secondary school adolescents. Finally, Stanley (1978) compared three groups - parent-adolescent, parents only, and control - using family education to teach moral reasoning. Not only did the parent-adolescent group undergo the most change, but this upward shift in moral reasoning was maintained on one year follow-up.

Adolescent Pathology. Several studies cited previously have alluded to the possibility that dysfunction among adolescents may be directly linked to family pathology. A number of studies confirm this relationship. Barnes et al. (1986) and Hundleby and Mercer (1987), for example, both explored the relationship between adolescent drug and/or alcohol abuse and parental behaviour. In the former study, the results indicated a direct relationship between parental drinking and adolescent alcohol use. Further, adolescent alcohol abuse was inversely related to parental control and support, that is, when parental support was high, the probability of adolescent alcohol abuse was very low. In the latter study, using a sample of Ontario (Canada) adolescents, the findings revealed that adolescent drug use was directly related to parental drug use and low parental affection and involvement. This combination of variables accounted for 22% of the explained variance.

In a case study of a poor black family, Aponte (1986) noted their chronic underorganization and their lack of any hope for the future. Similarly, Ausloos (1986), using case history data, suggested that dysfunctional families may be differentiated by their perception of time. In one group, characterized by rigid family transactions, time is lived as if it were arrested and forgotten; there is perceived to be no linkage between events in the past and those in the present. In the second group, characterized by chaotic transactions, time is lived as if it were eventful, one event rapidly followed by another, with each new event driving out the memory of the last so that time is lived in the perpetual present. In one group life is experienced as continuously the same whereas in the other life is experienced as continuously different.

Finally, Waxler (1974) addressed the question of causal direction in the evolution of adolescent pathology. In this study, members of families containing a normal or a schizophrenic adolescent were artificially rearranged to form two groups: a schizophrenic adolescent with normal parents and "schizophrenic" parents with a normal adolescent. Both groups of "families" were asked to perform the same cognitive task. The findings revealed that (1) schizophrenic adolescents had little effect on normal parents; (2) "schizophrenic" parents had little effect on normal adolescents; but (3) normal parents had a significant effect on schizophrenic adolescents, all but eliminating the cognitive deficit which had previously characterized them such that there was no difference in the performance of the two groups of adolescents.

Miscellaneous Studies. Several additional studies deserve mention. All speak to the impact of parent-adolescent interaction, yet none fit into any of the preceding categories.

Krant and Pris (1976) studied Machiavellianism in parent-adolescent relations, that is, the tendency of a person to be manipulative and controlling in interaction with another individual. A game involving bluffing was used as the stimulus. The results showed a direct relationship between parental manipulation and child behaviour, especially that between father and adolescent. The authors speculate that this attribute is learned sequentially in the family, with adolescents becoming progressively more skilled.

Fox and Inazu (1980) studied communication concerning sexuality between mother and adolescent daughter pairs. In general, sexually-related topics were frequently discussed. However, the more frequently this was the case, the more responsible was the pattern of sexual behaviour exhibited by the daughters. The authors argue that the family provides a cognitive and perceptual filter for the children, selectively including or excluding information and, moreover, assigning varying degrees of salience to the information that is included. This appears especially relevant with regard to sexual information, for it is the family, they suggest, from whom children initially learn about sex.

Finally, Thomas and Chess (1976) followed a sample of children from birth to adolescence. Concerned particularly with emotional reactivity, their data show that of 136 children, 43 (31%) developed behaviourial problems prior to adolescence compared to five children (4%) whose problems emerged during adolescence. By late adolescence about 50% of these problem children had fully recovered. Moreover, while some experienced the transition to adolescence as traumatic, others made

the shift smoothly and without difficulty. Consequently, the authors, like Offer et al. (1981), question the utility of the notion of adolescent turmoil.

Status Aspiration

The final group of studies and reviews to be explored in the "entry" phase concerns status aspiration. Sociological in origin, the terms refers to the extent to which parents and their offspring perceive higher education as a viable means of achieving increased social status for the offspring. Operationally, then, it refers to the proportion of parents who plan and/or expect their offspring to go on to acquire a university education and the proportion of adolescents who share these aspirations.

Studies of status aspiration are numerous, with Gilbert (1977) noting that over 400 published and unpublished had been completed by 1970. My reading suggests that these researchers have continued to publish prolifically. Detailed exposition of this body of work extends beyond the scope of the present paper. Instead, I will focus only on selected studies and reviews which I judge representative of much of the work in this field. To simplify review, these reports will be broken into three sets concerned, respectively, with basic findings, elaborated findings, and efforts at explanation.

Basic Findings. This line of inquiry was established in the United States and is exemplified by the seminal work of Sewell and his colleagues (Sewell et al., 1970; Sewell & Hauser, 1980) which has come to be known as the "Wisconsin model". This seeks to explain educational (and occupational) aspiration in terms of four factors: socioeconomic status (SES), mental ability, academic achievement and significant other (ie., parental) influence. To this end, Sewell collected data from over 400 secondary school students in 1957 and then followed them up in 1964 and 1975, these data then fitted into a path model. The central finding was that there was a monotonic (ie., linear) relationship between parental influence and adolescent educational aspiration. Further, parental influence mediated the effects of SES and mental ability. At the same time, academic achievement was strongly related to mental ability which, in turn, influenced parental perception. Overall, the model accounts for 41% of the explained variance.

Subsequent research has confirmed these findings and extended them. Rozoff (1961), for example, demonstrates a relationship between SES and academic achievement. Of those adolescents who scored high on both factors, 82% planned to attend university. Conversely, of those who scored low on both, only 18% had such plans. Similarly, Hogan (1980) reports a close relationship between SES and status aspiration among gifted adolescents.

Smith (1981, 1982) confirmed the salience of parents as role models for their adolescent offspring. However, he also showed that fathers tend to be comparatively more influential than mothers, with concordance between marital partners the most potent combination of all. Similarly, Mifflen and Mifflen (1982) show in their review that only 20% of adolescents whose fathers had a public school education planned to go to university compared to more than twice that proportion among adolescents whose fathers had at least some postsecondary education. They show too that father education and income are not the only potent indicators of SES; father's occupation may be just as

important. Thus, adolescents whose fathers were professionals and managers had higher educational aspiration than those whose fathers were craftsmen or labourers.

In a study of Ontario (Canada) secondary school students, Pavalko and Bishop (1966) showed that high SES was related to both IQ and educational aspiration. Interestingly, this relationship was more true of adolescent males than females, a findings subsequently replicated by Cross (1974; see also Davis, 1977/78; Eckland, 1964, 1965). Anisef's (1986) more recent review of Canadian studies in this area confirms the relationship between SES, child gender and aspiration, adding that the adolescents of fathers with high compared to low status occupations tend to exhibit less occupational indecision.

In her review, Banks (1976) demonstrates that the relationship between SES and education aspiration applies equally in France, Russia, Poland and the United Kingdom. In the United Kingdom, for example, some 90% of high SES, high ability male adolescents plan to go on to university. This is true of only 10% of their female counterparts who are low SES and low ability. More importantly, she goes on to show that the relationship between parental influence, child gender, family SES and educational aspiration are more complex than previously thought.

For example, it appears that parental expectations of their adolescent offspring are not merely a function of their SES, but are related too to their child's academic achievement. Parents whose adolescent offspring do poorly in high school subsequently lower their educational expectations of their children. The opposite appears to be true of high achievement among low SES adolescents which acts as a "family involvement catalyst". That is, such achievement increases parents previous educational expectations and thus brings them more in line with their already high aspirations. The implied suggestion of a feedback or reciprocal relationship between parents and adolescents is, incidentally, inconsistent with Sewell's path model which necessarily assumes a weak linear relationship between factors.

Banks also shows that SES is not an absolute status, but rather a relative one. Conceptualizing social class structure in terms of the rungs on a ladder, high SES families seek to stay put whereas low SES families seek to move up a number of steps. In this sense, the aspiration of high SES parents may be greater than that of their low SES counterparts, but the latter tend to be more ambitious - that is, wish to move ahead more - than the former.

As for parents as role models for their adolescent children, Banks shows that this varies as function of age and gender. Parental influence on educational aspiration tends to be cross-sex linked, with fathers more influential with daughters and mothers more influential with sons (see also Boocock, 1972). Moreover, this relationship appears to become more significant as the child gets closer to the age of university entrance. It also relates to adolescent's perception of their parents' marital relationship. Sons who perceive their mothers to have low decision-making power in relation to fathers will exhibit less desire to achieve academically than those whose mothers are perceived to have high decision-making power.

Porter et al. (1982) add to these finding in a large scale study of Ontario (Canada) secondary school students (n=9000) and their parents (n=3000). This confirmed the direct relationship between

fathers' occupational status and adolescents' educational aspiration, and that this much more likely to be true of boys than girls generally, but also showed that this difference was intensified by SES; lower SES girls were much less likely than their high SES counterparts to aspire to higher education. Additional findings showed that (1) both high and low SES parents had similarly high aspirations for their offspring, but only high SES actually expected that these aspirations would be realized; (2) parental influence was significantly greater than that of peers on adolescent aspiration; (3) parental influence was greater as regards long- as opposed to short-range plans; (4) some 30% of adolescent respondents, most of them with low SES parents, reported receiving little or no help whatever from parents, that is, they were independent of parental influence; (5) academic ability was largely independent of SES, that is, there were many low SES adolescents with high academic ability; (6) not only were high SES parents more likely than their low SES counterparts to help their offspring with school work, but when such help was given, among high SES families it was typically provided by fathers whereas among low SES families it was typically provided by mothers; and (7) secondary schools tend to reproduce the larger society's stratification system, with high SES adolescents more likely placed ("streamed") in programs that would prepare them for university whereas their low SES counterparts would more likely find themselves in programs oriented toward vocational training (see Bowles & Ginitis, 1972). The overall model accounted for 59% of the explained variance among boys and 62% among girls.

Finally, Gilbert (1977) sought to replicate Sewell's model using Ontario (Canada) high school seniors. The overall results were identical, the model accounting for 41% of the explained variance. However, the influence of significant others - in this case, mothers influence over their sons - was even greater than in the American model. Banks (1976) similarly notes that Danish parents tend to be more influential than their American counterparts. Variation in parental influence notwithstanding, the following conclusion of Gilbert (1977) appears representative of the basic research literature regarding status aspiration:

> ... the role of the family in the formation of educational and occupational expectations is a very strong one indeed, dominat[ing] the role of achieved criteria .... The family, through its direct effect upon the level of educational expectation ... serves as a prime mechanism of status transmission. (parentheses added).

Elaborated Findings. The thrust of the research in this area has been to suggest that factors other than the prime four noted above - **SES, mental ability, academic achievement, parental influence** -also play a potential role in status aspiration.

Banks (1976), for example, demonstrates that parental influence is not merely a function of the presence of a parent-child relationship. Rather, the effectiveness of the parent as a role model turns on the character and quality of that relationship. Parents who "successfully" inculcate their educational aspirations into their adolescent offspring tend to have a relationship with them which may be characterized as affectionate and approving, and one which avoids coercion and encourages compliance through the use of reasoned explanation. These data suggest that it is possible to differentiate between

"successful" and "unsuccessful" families within each SES group. Furthermore, adolescent boys and girls appear to do best when they have a different sort of relationship with each parent. Boys who demonstrate high educational aspiration tend to have a supportive relationship with their mothers and a democratic one with their fathers. Girls, on the other hand, respond best within the context of an unrestrictive relationship with their mothers and a supportive relationship with their fathers. One consequence is that girls tend to perform better than boys in high school but less well in the more competitive atmosphere of university.

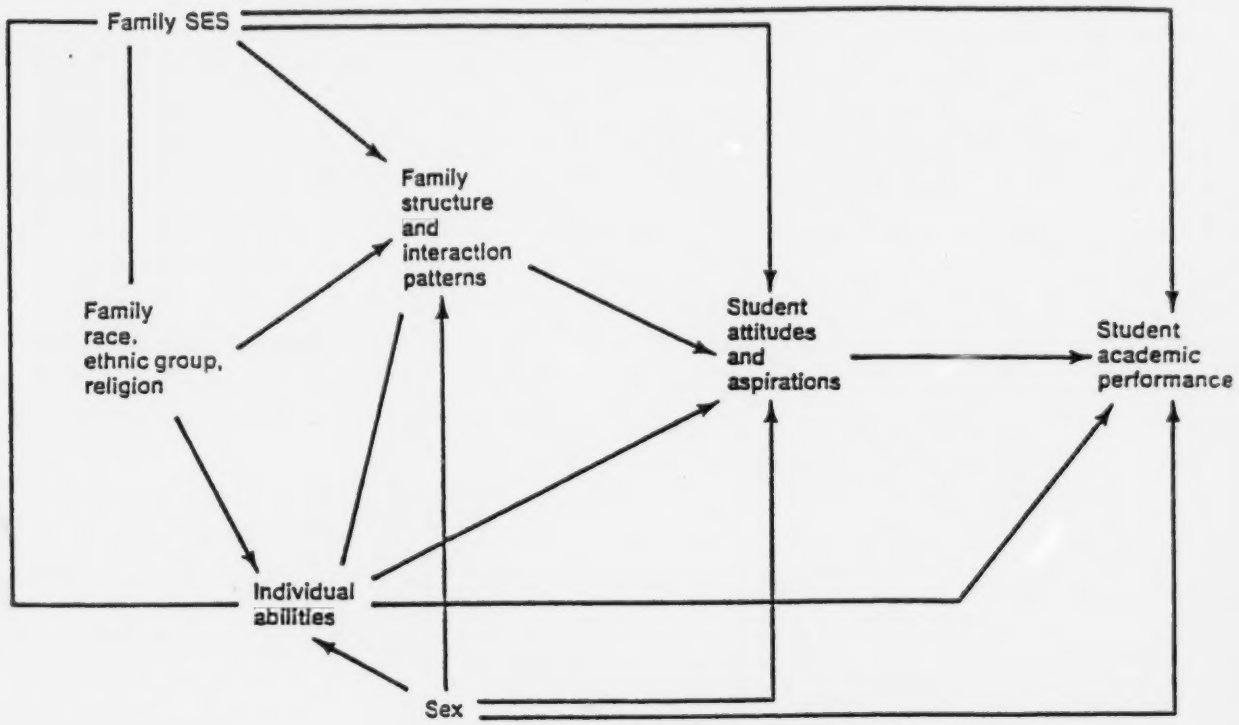
A closely related set of factors concerns the ethnic character of the families in question. Boocock (1972) reviews American evidence that Jewish and Asian adolescents consistently out perform their Black and Puerto Rican counterparts. This applies across a range of measures, particularly verbal fluency, verbal reasoning and mathematics. The author suggests this reflects a fundamental difference in world view. Those ethnic and cultural groups which place a high value on education as the means to status mobility and self-fulfilment tend to see the world as an orderly place, one which places a priority on systematic planning and which accords individual credit for achievement.

Another relevant factor concerns life events which may interfere or block educational aspiration. One such event concerns early marriage, especially among low SES women. Lowe and Witt (1984), for example, were able to account for 42% of the variance using early marriage to predict educational attainment. Similarly, Kerckoff and Parrow (1979), using a sample of more than 5000 adolescents, found that early marriage was inversely related to later educational attainment among men. When early marriage took place in high school, it significantly reduced the likelihood that they would attend university and further reduced the probability of graduation among those that did attend. There was no relationship between early marriage and educational attainment among men already attending university at the time of their marriage. Bringing together this range of factors, Boocock (1972) developed the model of status aspiration depicted in Figure 1. In the present context, two aspects of the model are especially noteworthy. First, status aspiration is evidently a multidimensional phenomenon, and involves both a range of direct and indirect effects (see also Porter et al., 1982: 31, 295). Second, the single most potent influence on adolescent educational aspiration centres on what Boocock calls "family structure and interaction patterns". While I would wish to amend the model to reflect the various reciprocal affects noted above, it will suffice here to suggest that adolescent internalization of educationally relevant attitudes and values are central features of their socialization. Such values and attitudes will not merely impel adolescents holding them to the door of the university, but will also influence what goes on when they enter and beyond.

Efforts at Explanation. The fact that SES, parental influence and adolescent status aspiration are all related hardly explains why this should be so. Put differently, it seems reasonable to wonder how is it that parental socialization practices should vary so dramatically by social class?

Kohn (1969, 1983) is one of the few researchers in this area whose work explicitly addresses this crucial issue. Specifically, he attacks the problem in terms of mechanisms of value transmission, with data drawn from the United States and Italy. These show that class-based socialization practices

FIGURE 1. Characteristics of individual students which are related to school performance.



can be traced back to the intellectual flexibility and the substantive complexity which characterize class-based employment. Work available to low SES wage earners tends to involve activities which: are highly routinized and repetitive, particularly involving the manipulation of things; involve a high level of supervision and thus a low level of worker discretion; and, involve a variety of rules and procedures imposed by an external authority figure. Conversely, work available to high SES wage earners tends to involve activities which: are highly varied and often novel, particularly involving the manipulation of people and information; involve a low level of supervision and thus a high level of self-direction; and, involve few rules and procedures, the choice of activity a function of worker choice and initiative.

Such systematic variation in life condition translates, in turn, into variation in child socialization practices. Low SES parents tend to stress conformity with externally imposed standards, and direct and immediate consequences of misbehaviour. In contrast, high SES parents tend to stress child self-direction in accord with internalized standards, and response to misbehaviour which varies as a function of parents' interpretation of the child's intent. Furthermore, these tendencies extend into the sex-linked character of the relations between parents and children, and even show some variation by child age. Thus, high SES fathers tend to have a warmer, closer relationship with their sons than their low SES counterparts with children ten years of age and older. That is, low SES fathers will tend to be as close to their young children as high SES fathers, but will begin to pull away from them as the children get older. Similar differences apply to low and high SES mothers in relation to their daughters, except that these findings hold irrespective of the child's age.

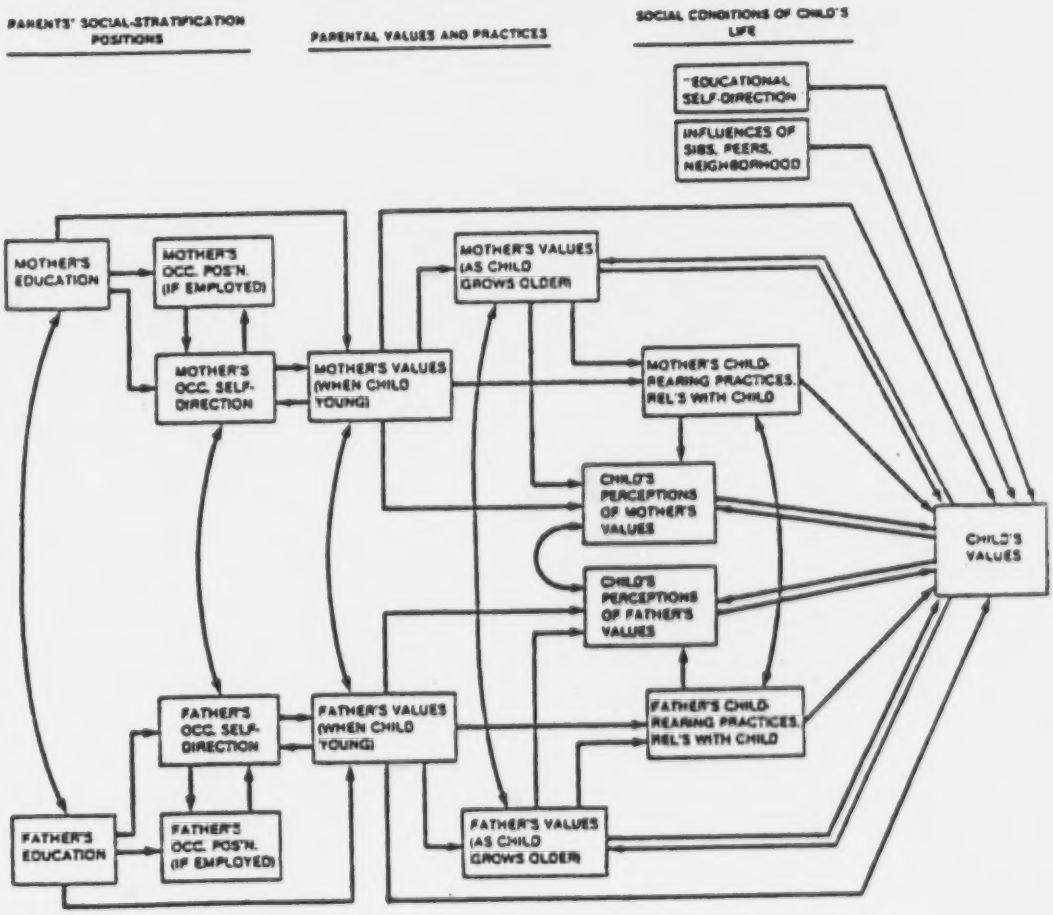
In later research, Kohn (1983) identifies several additional complications. For example, mothers and fathers do not necessarily hold the same values; indeed, the correlation between the two is only moderate at 0.39. Parental behaviour and child perception will also not be identical. Further, the school experience of children may vary as much in terms of intellectual flexibility and substantive complexity as does the work world of their parents. Kohn acknowledges the importance of the family's life cycle stage and the broader historical context in which parents and children grow and develop. Finally, he calls attention to the reciprocal relationship between parents and children. The result is the "preliminary" model of value transmission and status aspiration depicted in Figure 2.

This model demonstrates just how complex a phenomenon status aspiration is. On the other hand, it makes clear that family interaction processes are not merely associated with, but rather at the heart of status transmission as well as a range of additional processes relevant to education, such as communication, problem-solving, perception, valuation, affective expression, symbolic manipulation and the like.

Discussion

Extended discussion of this and subsequent data will be deferred to the last section of this paper. However, several brief, preliminary comments do seem in order, both with respect to theory and practice.

FIGURE 2. Schematic outline of the transmission of values in the family.


PARENTS' SOCIAL-STRATIFICATION POSITIONS
PARENTAL VALUES AND PRACTICES
SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF CHILD'S LIFE
EDUCATIONAL SELF-DIRECTION
INFLUENCES OF SIBS, PEERS, NEIGHBORHOOD
MOTHER'S EDUCATION
MOTHER'S OCC. POS'N. (IF EMPLOYED)
MOTHER'S OCC. SELF-DIRECTION
MOTHER'S VALUES (WHEN CHILD YOUNG)
MOTHER'S VALUES (AS CHILD GROWS OLDER)
MOTHER'S CHILD-REARING PRACTICES, REL'S WITH CHILD
CHILD'S PERCEPTIONS OF MOTHER'S VALUES
CHILD'S PERCEPTIONS OF FATHER'S VALUES
CHILD'S VALUES
FATHER'S OCC. SELF-DIRECTION
FATHER'S VALUES (WHEN CHILD YOUNG)
FATHER'S CHILD-REARING PRACTICES, REL'S WITH CHILD
FATHER'S EDUCATION
FATHER'S OCC. POS'N. (IF EMPLOYED)
FATHER'S VALUES (AS CHILD GROWS OLDER)

Theory. First, many of the findings reported above are vulnerable to criticism on methodological grounds. As the comments of Talmadge and Ruback (1985) and Kohn (1983) make clear, it is common practice among researchers in this area to make observations and reach conclusions about the influence of "the family" based on self-report data drawn from a single member. Given the reciprocal relations which appear to characterize family life, such inferences may not only be ill-founded, they may also incorrectly suggest causal direction leading from parents to adolescents and from the past to the present.

Second, despite some consensus in the literature, there remain specific areas of confusion. The extent to which parental influence is same- or cross-sex linked is a case in point. I suspect that the ambiguity of these findings reflect confusion that is both methodological and conceptual in origin. It has a methodological source in the fact that some researchers rely on adolescent self-report data while others draw on data from mothers, fathers, siblings or some combination of all three. The result is to severely restrict the comparability of findings. Such confusion may also have a conceptual source insofar as different authors appear to be examining different dimensions. Achievement motivation, ambition, educational or occupational values, educational or occupational aspiration, parental expectations and so on are all concepts represented in the above review. It may well be that parent-adolescent relations having certain characteristics may pertain to one class of these attributes while relations of a different sort pertain to another class.

Third, it appears that much of what is "common knowledge" about adolescent experience in general and parent-adolescent interaction in particular is more myth than fact, more ideology than insight. So-called generalizations concerning identity, individuation, separation and crises typically represent an adult-centred perspective - a collage of partial recollections, convictions, expectations, hopes and even dreams, many based on small samples - which grossly misrepresents the reality which it seeks to depict. For the majority of adolescents, that reality is typically one of steady growth and development, of change and elaboration, within the context of parental support, love and encouragement.

Fourth, all such generalizations require careful qualification within an extraordinarily heterogeneous and differentiated population. All too often in this literature researchers have preferred the univariate to the multivariate model, and even worse, have tended to talk about adolescents as if transition through a given life stage implied similar experience within a homogeneous population. Integration of the literature from several different disciplines tells quite a different story. Not only are distinctions based on factors such as class, ethnicity, race, mental ability and academic achievement important, but all of these factors appear to interact. Just as most high SES parents are "successful" in convincing their adolescent offspring to share their values, so some are "unsuccessful". The converse appears to apply to low SES parents, complicated by the intervening influence of school "streaming" programs. Perhaps even more important are the findings that speak to the character and quality of parent-adolescent relations as the basis for explaining such successes and failures.

Fifth, taken together, these data highlight the extraordinary salience of parent-child and indeed family interaction processes with respect to socialization in general and education in particular. Despite some areas of real divergence, parents and adolescents typically share much in common, and influence each other accordingly. It is within this context that all acquire a particular meaning system, learn how and in what context particular forms of affect may be expressed (see Gagnon & Simon, 1973), discover how to communicate one with the other, and evolve patterns of behaviour which clinical experience shows are quite stable and highly resistant to change (Benjamin, 1983). In addition, adolescents acquire a particular world view, including what they can expect of themselves and of others in the world, and what they can hope to achieve using various routes and methods. Education is one such medium and some come to see it as filled with opportunity and challenge while others see it as a dead-end filled with insurmountable obstacles. All of this they cannot not bring with them to the university campus, and it is reasonable to suppose that these patterns of behaviour will only yield gradually (if at all) to any developmental influences encountered there. This perspective also implies that in-coming students will vary in their preparedness for university life, both in terms of academic skills and abilities, but also in terms of social skills and interpersonal patterns.

None of this is to suggest that the family is the sole and only influence on adolescent development prior to university entrance. Extended family members, same-age peers of both sexes, teachers and others all play their part. Indeed, in matters such as dress code, peer influence may be prepotent. More important, however, is that dichotomous categorization invariably obfuscates. It is never a question of parent or peers, but rather one of **degrees of simultaneous influence.**

Finally, the impact of structural factors exogenous to the family warrant attention. In particular this refers to the effects of social class. By the life conditions it imposes on families via the labour force, it not only shapes the life chances of its members, but even affects their social interaction, including the socialization of their children. As this pertains to education, it speaks eloquently to the issue of inequality of access and opportunity. If, as much of the developmental literature appears to suggest (Rogers, 1980), the university contributes to student development, then surely this can only apply to adolescents given the opportunity to attend. As things now stand, this is much more likely to be the case among the affluent than the impoverished in societies worldwide. .

Practice. There are at least three practice contexts in which "entry" data are relevant: **recruitment, accessibility and screening.** As regards recruitment, at present a significant proportion of institutional revenues are dependent on the number of students who attend each year. In turn, it is the responsibility of admissions and other staff components (eg. public relations) to recruit the requisite number of new student candidates. Such recruiting efforts vary tremendously across North America, but will typically involve some combination of the following methods: newspaper, radio and even television advertising; a lecture series in which university personnel make on-site visits to secondary schools; creation of a mailing list of prospective students; mail out campaigns involving pamphlets, application and other public relations material; student orientation programs in which prospective

students are invited to visit the campus; and, most recently, videotape presentations suitable for viewing in the home of prospective students.

The logic underlying these diverse approaches is simple: since it is the student who must ultimately make the decision to attend, it is towards the student that such recruitment efforts are directed. If third party adults are included at all, they tend to be official personnel such as secondary school guidance counsellors.

Entry data reviewed above plainly suggest that another extremely important group has systematically been overlooked in the recruitment drive: the parents. The data are unequivocal concerning the influence of parents in the decision to attend university; it seems likely that this also extends to initial program choice and institutional selection. In turn, this implies an additional approach to recruiting quite different than that used traditionally. Promotional materials which are effective with students may be significantly less so with parents. Emphasizing opportunities for social relations, for example, which may attract students, may be a source of concern to parents, either on moral and/or security grounds. Furthermore, parental perspectives on university life may be grounded, not on present realities, but on past experiences, now significantly out of date. Recruiting through parents may thus involve more than merely public relations; it may need to have an important educational component delivered in a language suitable for adult respondents.

This orientation to recruiting calls attention to a second area of concern, namely, accessibility. For service staff, this is a problematic issue which turns on the distinction between principles and performance. On the one hand, university recruitment has traditionally been grounded on principles of merit. Those with the academic qualifications to attend should be encouraged to do so. Translated directly into action, however, this approach has effectively worked to sustain and reinforce social inequality. Recruitment efforts have primarily been directed towards high SES students who are predisposed to attend university anyway, both by virtue of their parents' expectations and their own secondary school training.

On the other, university life is also grounded on principles of equality, especially of opportunity and access. These principles argue in favour of proactive recruitment to bridge barriers of social class to attract students with varying degrees of ability but who, as a function both of background and training, would otherwise be unlikely to attend university. When enacted, however, these principles have complex fiscal and logistical consequences for service staff. Low SES students will typically be underprepared academically and, in addition, may well elect to attend against parental opposition or at least without enthusiastic parental support. It follows that without a service infrastructure to provide social, academic and other support (eg. counselling), such students may be highly vulnerable to attrition or failure.

In this sense, universities stand squarely at the centre of an on-going debate concerning both access and equality. It will be for administrative staff, as representatives of the community at large, to determine policy. But it will ultimately fall to service staff to enact it. For those institutions which

elect to stand on their principles, the above review suggests that there is much about family processes which service staff need to know.

Finally, as regards screening, I am using the term here to refer to institutional efforts to gather information about in-coming students and to what ends these data may be used. At present, information gathering efforts vary tremendously. At one extreme are institutions satisfied with basic admission data, typically confined to name, age, sex and evidence of the ability to pay. At the other extreme are institutions which subject their prospective candidates to extensive testing. Such data may be used simply for registration and other record keeping purposes. Alternately, it may be used for various programmatic ends, including roommate matching, remedial programming, vocational and academic counselling, and so on.

Whatever the information base and however it may be used, such efforts have heretofore largely, if not completely, ignored family interaction processes. Data reviewed above suggest that this screening strategy may be short-sighted. By now it will be apparent that student dispositions and attributes do not attach to them alone, but rather reflect their socialization experience within a specific family system. It is through the lens of that system that they will likely interact with and interpret their university experience. It follows that, at least initially, information regarding students' family systems will be potentially invaluable in the design of student service programming in virtually all of the areas noted above. Indeed, in the face of competition for recruitment and fiscal pressure to prevent attrition, I predict that student service divisions who have access to an extensive student data base will be at a decided programmatic advantage. The above review suggests that those responsible for screening efforts would be well advised to include and use information with respect to family systems.

ATTENDANCE

In the "entry" phase, I have tracked a cohort of eligible students as a subgroup among them have approached the door to the university. Here, I follow them inside and stay with them as a majority eventually graduate. The literature linking family and student development during this phase is much less voluminous than was the case with "entry". It is also more scattered and decidedly more specialized. Accordingly, the findings will, somewhat arbitrarily, be divided into four sets concerned, respectively, with **attendance, adjustment, return and social pathology.**

Attendance

Having inquired in detail into the factors which predict which secondary school students want to go to university, it only seems reasonable to follow-up and find out who actually attends. While studies which address this issue do indeed exist, if their numbers are any indication of salience, then, surprisingly, this issue appears to be much less interesting to researchers than who plans to attend.

The work of Sewell (Sewell & Hauser, 1980) is again pre-eminent. Using follow-up data from his 1957 secondary school subjects, Sewell shows that it is difficult to escape the effects of social class

as mediated by parental influence. The vast majority of students who went to university came from middle or upper SES families and, concomitantly, were those whose parents had initially encouraged them to attend.

A direct relationship between adolescents of high SES parents and university attendance have now been confirmed in America (Mifflen & Mifflen, 1982), the United Kingdom (Banks, 1976), Canada (Anisef, 1986) as well as Australia and Brazil (Bell & Stubb, 1968).

In the United States, these data also show that among those of all social classes who go to university, high SES students are more likely to graduate than their low SES counterparts, both because of differential degrees of parental support as well as differences in academically relevant skills and abilities (Mifflen & Mifflen, 1982). Similar findings are reported by Temple (1986) in a study which followed 245 adolescents from age 16, while they were in high school, to the age of 31. The study focused on four events - graduation from high school, attendance at university, graduation from university, and entry into graduate school - in terms of their predictors. Among other things, the results showed that (1) of those who planned in high school to go to university, 74% actually did so; (2) of those in high school who had no plans to go to university, 9% did indeed attend university; (3) of those who graduated from high school but did not go to university immediately, 41% did go on to university eventually, although they were less likely to graduate than those who went to university straight from secondary school; and (4) of those that attended university and subsequently dropped-out, some 13% eventually graduated from university later on. As to the predictors of university attendance and graduation, it appeared that high school graduation, college plans and social class were critical to the former whereas high school graduation, university type and academic achievement in university were central to the latter. While family support was only directly related to university plans, such influence was indirectly relevant to university attendance via values associated with social class.

In addition, Morrison and McIntyre (1971) review data which show a direct linkage between parental influence and occupational values and choices. The process of occupational crystallization, the authors suggest, may take more than a decade, from mid-adolescence to the mid-20's, and is tied primarily to fathers' educational and occupational status: the higher fathers' status on one or both counts, the more potent their influence, eclipsing all other sources. Such influence, however, is not direct; rather, it is mediated via the quality of the father-son relationship. When such relations are characterized by close, supportive interaction, they are likely associated with adolescent self-identification with father, and thus highly influential. Implied is a link between fathers occupation, adolescent university attendance and choice of university program and/or university major. While this linkage is only implicit in Morrison and McIntyre's (1971) review, it is explicit in Kelly's (1976) study of university specialization in Scotland. This demonstrates an extraordinary degree of concordance and continuity between family SES, fathers' occupation and adolescents' choice of university program. University students of middle class origin were disproportionately represented in such specialities as medicine, law and dentistry. By contrast, those of working class origin were much more likely to select education or engineering. In the vast majority of cases, such choices reflected their fathers current

occupation, a pattern apparently typical in this population since the 1930's and one, moreover, more potent among males than females.

Turning to the Canadian context, the relationship between university attendance and social class is once again in evidence. In Canada, university enrolment has increased dramatically in recent years, up 27% during the period 1982-1985 alone (Anisef, 1986). This represents a national participation rate[4] among 18-24-year-olds of 15.5%[5] among Canada's 65 universities. Such participation is closely tied to family SES: among those that attend university, high SES adolescents (ie., as defined by their fathers' education and income) are over-represented. Type of postsecondary education also varies by social class, with high SES students most likely to attend university while their low SES counterparts will most likely attend a technical or vocationally-oriented community college.

In addition, trends with respect to sex and ethnicity are also evident (Chronicle of Higher Education, 1987). For example, during the period 1973 to 1984, the proportion of university students whose parents had at least some postsecondary education rose from 23% to 29% among women, but declined from 18% to 15% among men. However, men still predominate among those in the general population who have a university degree. During the period in question, the proportion of women who have such a degree rose from 3% to nearly 8%. The comparable increase among men was from 6% to 11%. In other words, women are falling increasingly behind men in terms of the proportion who go on to higher education. Moreover, more among men than women, attendance at university is indicative of upward social mobility. As for ethnicity, during the period 1921 to 1981, Ontario (Canada) universities have consistently seen a disproportionate attendance by Jews and Asians compared to any other ethnic group.

Similar data with respect to the salience of ethnicity are seen in the work of Astin (1978). The research is based on data from a total of about 200,000 students accumulated during the decade of the 1960's under the auspices of the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP). With respect to ethnicity, his findings show, first, that Jewish students are least likely to report a change in their faith through four years of university (0.83), and second, that being a Jew was positively associated with liberal political values, academic achievement, autonomy, increasing educational aspiration, and subsequent attendance at graduate school, but negatively associated with marriage during university. Additional findings showed that: (1) about 20% of freshmen lived at home with their parents and, of these, most continued to do so in later years; (2) parental influence appeared to diminish gradually with time, especially among those who live in residence; (3) autonomy was associated with increasing

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[4] *The participation rate refers to that proportion of adolescents who attend university from the total cohort in the same age range (typically 18-24 years) who are technically eligible to do so.*

[5] *During the period 1982-1983, the number of students attending postsecondary education in Canada were as follows (Anisef, 1986): full-time, undergraduate: 426K; part-time, undergraduate: 267K; full- or part-time community college: 295K; graduate school: 83K. Compared to Canada as a whole, the participate rate in Ontario rose during the period 1970 to 1983 from 19% to 23% (Anisef, 1986).*

educational aspiration; (4) females were more likely than males to report a change in their values, although males displayed higher educational aspiration and were more likely to go on to graduate school than females; (5) those with high as opposed to low interpersonal self-esteem were more likely to interact with faculty - especially if they lived in residence - and performed better academically; and (6) the higher students' initial plans for achievement (eg. a degree in law or medicine), the more likely they were to achieve it (eg. law: 0.58). Astin concludes that the impact of university is greatest among students high in involvement which, in turn, is predicted by high family SES, high achievement in secondary school, high university admission test scores, high educational aspiration and the decision to live in residence. The converse will be true for those low in involvement, including the decision to live at home.

In light of these data, brief comment on the role of the family in attrition research seems in order. A case in point concerns the recent work of Tinto (1987). The author conceptualizes attendance as involving movement from one community to another, a process he refers to as "separation, transition and incorporation". Students must first detach themselves from family in order to attach themselves to others in the university. Consequently, although the author explicitly acknowledges the role of "external communities" (including family systems) to determine what transpires within the university, he nevertheless develops a model which concentrates on events and process within the university campus. The result is a model whose central constituents include student goals and intentions, academic performance, student-faculty interaction, extracurricular activities, and peer group interaction. Together, their purpose is to predict attrition which will be most likely during the freshman year.

This and other similar models are paradoxical in character. On the one hand, their proponents conceptualize variables such as academic performance as "within the university", and thus presumably independent of the influence of so-called "external communities". On the other hand, data reviewed in this and the preceding section suggest that precisely the reverse is true, that freshman are those most influenced by family processes by virtue of the fact that such "communities" are anything but "external". Rather, to the extent that interaction between students and family members is indeed on-going, Tinto's notion that university attendance be seen as one of "separation, transition and incorporation" distorts more than it clarifies. Instead, the data suggests that the process is one of gradual transformation **within** family systems, as adolescent "children" come to be seen and to identify themselves as "adults" within their family of origin. If correct, this reasoning suggests that the intellectual acrobatics whereby Tinto first acknowledges and then excludes family systems is unnecessary; events and processes associated with **both** the family and the university will, I believe, be necessary to the full explication of student attrition and persistence, a view with significant implications for both theorists and practitioners.

Adjustment

A second line of inquiry focuses on the adjustment of apparently well-functioning undergraduate university students. The term "adjustment" is here used as a generic covering an array of studies which

vary from a broad interest in student functioning to a narrow concern with some specific attribute. These studies vary too in the methods used and the disciplinary orientation of the investigator(s), with some inclined to search for pathology while others are frankly concerned with health. These differences aside, the studies reviewed below share one thing in common: they all demonstrate the potent and on-going influence of parent-child relations in the development of university students. To minimize confusion, in what follows I will distinguish between studies of a generic character and those which have a more specific focus.

Generic Studies. While the number of studies to examine student development in university is large, those which tie such development to the family remain as scarce as hen's teeth. One of the first such efforts was that of Westley and Epstein (1969). This relied on a self-selected sample of just under 100 mostly middle-class families each of whom had at least one child attending McGill University in Montreal, Quebec (Canada).All students were doing well academically at the time of their participation. Of these families, 59 agreed to in-depth psychiatric assessment in which all family members took part in one or more clinical interviews and completed a test battery. From preliminary results, the authors speculate that the most dysfunctional families were those that refused more intensive participation. Given the authors psychiatric orientation, one focus of inquiry was the distribution of pathology among subject families. Other concerns included the character of the marital relationship, the distribution of power in the family, and the relative degree of status mobility among husbands and wives.

The core findings showed that 26% of subject families were well functioning, 30% displayed mild symptomatology, 30% showed moderate symptomatology and 14% were frankly impaired. Family health - and thus the mental health of university undergraduates - was associated with a balanced division of labour in a father-led family characterized by maternal upward mobility, good problem solving skills, full acceptance of their marital and parental roles, and sexual intercourse among marital partners at the rate of four or more times per month.

More generally, the findings showed that the mental health of university undergraduates was critically dependent on the character and quality of their parents' marital relationship. Spousal pairs distributed on a continuum. At one end, were those 5% of couples characterized by "the adoration complex", a relationship in which both partners, despite 20 or more years of marriage, continued to see each other as ideal mates. At the other extreme, were relationships characterized by intense and on-going conflict and the display of psychiatric symptomatology by both spouses. The majority involved mild to moderate symptomatology, typically by one spouse, with over 50% of the spouses in this sample having ceased entirely to engage in sexual intercourse. Typically one spouse compensated for the other, thus completely insulating their children and leaving them free to develop normally. Furthermore, pathology was associated with downward mobility among the wives but upward mobility among the husbands.

Additional findings related to adolescent functioning showed that child health was related to (1) the psychological "health" of the mothers rather than the fathers; (2) the degree to which cross-

sex parents participated actively in parenting; and (3) among the boys only, the family's social status (high).

A more recent but less comprehensive effort is the work of Komarovsky (1976) who studied a sample of male seniors attending a handful of ivy league universities in the United States. All were doing well academically at the time of their participation. In the tradition of most studies of student development, this one focuses most of its attention on relations between students, faculty and same-age peers of both sexes. However, the author also found that her respondents consistently felt closer to their mothers than their fathers, reported maternal overprotectiveness as a problem for them, and indicated that as paternal education increased, their feelings of closeness to their fathers also increased.

More recently, Komarovsky's attitude toward the role of the family appears to have changed. The result is her study (1985) of over 200 female resident undergraduates attending a number of ivy league women's universities in the United States. Longitudinal data included periodic interviews, a test battery, and time and personal diaries kept expressly for this study. The study purports to explore the personal development of these women; in fact, it focused on three themes: parent-adolescent relations, career orientation, and peer relations, especially relations with boyfriends. The findings with respect to the first two themes only need be summarized here.

In simplified form, three findings stand out as central. First, the relationship between these women and their parents was a critical factor in predicting the nature and course of their individual development. These relations distributed on a continuum, from close to conflictual to alienated. Those girls with a close, supportive relationship were best prepared socially for the rigors of university life. In turn, parental support depended in part on parental educational experience. Those parents who themselves had a university education - some of them at the same university their daughters were now attending - were more likely to be supportive than those that had no such experience.

Second, family relations could either reinforce and enliven the university experience or be a significant source of cross-pressure (see Tinto, 1987). For example, for the minority of subjects who came from a working class background, the university experience could be the basis of increased family conflict. Working class fathers in particular harboured ambiguous feelings. On the one hand, their daughters' attendance at a prestigious university was a source of vicarious achievement; these women were often the first family member to have ever done so. On the other hand, the increasing independence of their daughters' behaviour was often incongruent with their own ideals concerning a daughter's proper behaviour. In such cases, parental anxiety over the perceived deleterious effects of the university moral climate could be a source of much conflict.

Indeed, Komarovsky is only one of several researchers who note that parents often experience considerable difficulty understanding the social world of the university their adolescent is attending (Corwin, 1965; DeCoster & Mable, 1981; Green, 1985). For those able to make this leap, the result appears to be a major shift in the basis of their relationship with their daughters, as each comes to see the other differently. Parents gradually come to accept that their daughters are no longer children in need of protection, but rather adults in need of continuing but more equal support. Similarly, daughters

come to see that their parents are no longer authority figures one must obey, but rather trusted allies whose advice should be respected but not necessarily accepted. In this sense, the university experience is indeed one of growing self-assurance and independence, but it is also one which both parents and adult children share. It does not mark the cessation of the parent-adult child relationship, but rather a transitional period during which that relationship matures, changing all of its participants in turn.

Finally, their parents' marital relationship is critical to the career orientation of these university students. Here, five distinct and changeable orientations were distinguished: those that held a traditional view of marriage and career; those who expressed a commitment to a future career; those who underwent a conversion from a traditional to a career orientation; those whose conversion moved in the opposite direction, from a career to a traditional perspective; and, student waverers who oscillated back and forth between traditional and career orientations. These categories appeared to reflect variation in a constellation of variables, including family values, degree of parental support or opposition, mothers who had been homemakers or had had careers, marital relations among parents that were harmonious or conflictual, and maternal satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their lot in life.

Specific Studies. While studies which explore specific aspects of parent-student interaction are relatively numerous, they are also highly fragmented, covering several divergent topic areas.

Vocational Values. Jackson (1980) examined the relationship between parents' values and the vocational attitudes and values of female undergraduates. Students whose parents held "traditional" values towards marriage were more likely than those whose parents were more "liberated" to place a high value on marriage and less weight on the potential of a future career. The parental influence turned on the degree to which students saw their relationship with their parents as warm and affectionate and perceived their parents' marriage as stable and satisfying.

Family Relations. Several studies have explored various aspects of on-going family relations among university students. Cicirelli (1980), for example, distinguished among 10 dimensions in the relationship between female students and their parents and siblings. On nine out of ten dimensions, subjects felt differently about their siblings than they did about their parents. The parent-student relationship was central in such matters as active help, achievement and leadership. However, student-siblings relations were more potent as regards emotional support. Further, students reported feeling especially close to their siblings when the subjects were in conflict with their parents.

DeCoster and Mable (1981), using case history data, argue in favour of a link between parent-student relations and student attributes such as self-esteem, trust, self-reliance and interpersonal relations. Of particular importance was student recognition of parental love, admiration, warmth and affirmation.

Reuter and Biller (1973) studied the relationship between adjustment and the perception of their fathers by male students. They found that good adjustment was significantly associated with the perception of high nurturance and moderate to high availability. Conversely, low adjustment was correlated with high availability but low nurturance.

Becker and Cross (1977) investigated the relationship between male students' memory of their parents and their current perception of same-age females. The results showed that students' recollection of their fathers was more likely to influence their present perception of females than their memory of their mothers. In addition, those who recalled their fathers as "accepting" rated "dominant" females positively and "accepting" females negatively.

Klos and Singer (1981) examined the cognitive processing of students under three simulated patterns of interaction with their parents: confrontation, collaborative confrontation, and collaboration. Furthermore, within confrontational situations, the simulations included outcomes that were either resolved or unresolved. The results indicated that simulated parent-student interaction was significantly related to long-standing interpersonal conflict in real life. For example, repetitive thoughts and feelings of anger and stress accounted for 67% and 72%, respectively, of the explained variance in students' performance of a cognitive task. The authors speculate that the experiment reawakened unpleasant past experiences, thus displacing other types of thought. This apparently occurred despite the fact that the conflicts in question had, in fact, been resolved some years before.

Barber and Thomas (1986) examined the expression of physical affection in families containing at least one university student. The findings suggested that affective expression was a function of student gender. Fathers, for example were more likely to be physically affectionate with their daughters than with their sons. Conversely, both parents were likely to be companionable with the same-sex child, that is, fathers with sons, mothers with daughters. The significance of these findings, say the authors, is that they point to an association between student self-esteem, student gender, and parent-student interaction. The self-esteem of female students appears to be associated with a combination of maternal support and paternal physical affection. The self-esteem of male students, on the other, appears related to maternal companionship and paternal contact.

Thompson and his colleagues (Walker & Thompson, 1983; Thompson & Walker, 1984; Thompson et al, 1985) explored several aspects of the relationship between female students, their mothers and their grandmothers. With respect to the relationship between intimacy and aid, the authors found, to their surprise, that in general, there was a negative relationship between the two, that is, that it was not reasonable to infer one from the other. They suggest that it is important to distinguish between discretionary and obligatory intergenerational aid.

With respect to attachment (ie., emotional dependence), they found that (1) female students were less attached to their mothers than their mothers were to their grandmothers; and (2) attachment was strongly associated with aid giving, especially if it was reciprocal. They conclude that for the maintenance of attachment, it is apparently more important to give than to receive.

With respect to intergenerational continuity per se, student respondents perceived less intergenerational continuity than either their mothers or their grandmothers. Moreover, the findings showed that these differences were unrelated to the respondents' developmental stage.

Finally, over a 17 year period, Reiss (1981) compared families containing an adolescent who was either asymptomatic, delinquent or schizophrenic. All families were confronted with one of several

problem solving tasks which had in common that interpersonal cooperation and collaboration were essential to task completion. Furthermore, in all cases family triads used, involving mother, father and adolescent child. The findings show that families vary systematically on three dimensions relevant to problem solving, namely, configuration (the ability to discover patterns in experience), coordination (the extent to which members see themselves as a group or as a set of separate individuals) and closure (the tendency to close off the search for more information slowly or quickly). The combination of these dimensions was used to categorize subject families into one of three "family paradigms", that is, characteristic patterns of thinking and problem solving which regulate how members see and interact with each and with the outside world: environment-sensitive, distance-sensitive, and consensus-sensitive. Such paradigms were associated with normal, delinquent, and schizophrenic families, respectively. The relevance of paradigm choice for student adjustment is the extent to which families characterized by different paradigms are differentially responsive to stress. Under low stress conditions, all three family types will likely exhibit adjustment within the normal range. However, under high stress conditions, Reiss predicts that only environment-sensitive families will exhibit the flexibility to cope adequately.

Social Competence. Filsinger and Lamke (1983) explored the family transmission of social competence. The authors expected that transmission would be direct, that is, based on the acquisition by students of specific parental skills and abilities. In fact, the results showed that transmission was more likely to be indirect, with the social competence of male students associated with maternal social awareness and paternal self-esteem.

In a similar vein, Bell (1985) found that students who have a close, supportive relationship with their parents will tend to be socially competent and exhibit high positive self-regard.

Stress Management. Archer and Peters (1986) explored the correlates of stress among a sample of university students. They found that (1) relations with parents accounted for 29% of all sources of stress, the single largest category; and (2) this relationship was stronger among women than men.

Laughlin (1985) explored the sources of stress among married graduate students. This showed that lack of time together and feelings of divided loyalty were two central sources of stress. In turn, such stress negatively affected the couple's sexual relationship as well as their interaction with their child(ren). In addition, the stress of graduate work was more likely to be problematic for female rather than male students. This difference turned on the degree of spousal support; whereas male graduate students were likely to get much support from their wives, this was much less true of the husbands of female students. The discovery that relations with family members - either parents and/or spouses - can provide positive support in some contexts but negative support in others has been noted on a number of occasions in the literature (eg. Blumberg & Flaherty, 1983; Evans et al., 1986).

Commuting. In recent years, a literature has developed which compared commuting and residential students. A representative example is the work of Chickering (1974). With respect to residential students, this revealed that (1) they tend to come from high SES families; (2) one or both parents will have at least some university education; (3) one or both parents will have worked in a

professional or managerial capacity; and (4) both parents had expected their son or daughter would go to university. With respect to commuter students, this showed that (1) they tend to come from low SES families; (2) neither parent had had any university education; (3) both parents often felt threatened or ambivalent about having a child in university; and (4) university attendance was consistent with lack of change in the parent-adolescent relationship (see also Pascarella, 1984; Welty, 1976; Carnegie Foundation, 1986).

Political Ideology. The literature concerning student political ideology is voluminous; its comprehensive review is beyond the scope of this paper. More importantly, only a small portion of this literature has explored the relationship between student ideology and family influence. Those researchers that have examined this issue invariably report a significant linkage between the two.

Silvern and Nakamura (1973), for example, explored the concordance between student and parental political views. They found that (1) the political views of students were highly correlated with those of their parents; (2) males were more likely to be left of centre than females; (3) as a group, students were more left of centre than their parents; and (4) left-wing students deviated more from the view of their parents than left-wing parents did from the view of their children. The authors conclude that family relations and university zeitgeist interact to influence student political views.

In a similar vein, Krant and Lewis (1975) explored the relationship between political views and degree of intergenerational continuity among students and their parents. The results indicate a high degree of intergenerational continuity, with parental political views good predictors of the political position of their children. Further, divergence between parental conservatism and student socialism was associated with a dysfunctional level of parent-child conflict. In total, the data accounted for 34% of the explained variance in student political views.

Student Aggression. Graybill et al. (1985) found no relationship between student aggressive behaviour in the present and their experience of child abuse in the past. Indeed, aggressive behaviour was more likely among students who did **not** report childhood abuse than those that did.

Student Retention. As noted in the introduction, the vast majority of the student retention literature treats the family as a residual variable and thus has been excluded from this review. There are, however, two exceptions which I regard as worthy of note. The first, the work of Tinto (1987), has already been examined above. The second is the work of Bank et al. (1987) which explored the effects of social influence on student decision to remain or leave the university. Using a sample of 1240 freshman, the authors found that parents, peers and faculty were all important sources of influence. While faculty were clearly least influential, the influence of parents and peers was more ambiguous; parents were more influential in some situations, peers more influential in others. More importantly, parental influence did **not** fade over time to be replaced by campus influences. Rather, parental influence persisted as a function of student internalization of parental values and expectations, despite the fact that parents were not physically present on campus.

The changing demographic composition of university populations has meant that an increasing proportion of students are mature adults, either coming to the university for the first time or returning after a long absence. Several studies of such students make clear the on-going importance of relations with spouses and children to their academic success.

Astin (1976), for example, studied a sample of returning female students. In the majority of cases, the income and education of their parents and their spouses indicated middle and upper-class status. While their return to university was diversely motivated, on-going family problems, either with their children and/or their spouse, were reported most frequently. On-going problems in university were typically family problems, especially competing family obligations. Nevertheless, most respondents reported that returning to university had produced a number of benefits, including improvement in their marital relationship, greater self-respect and increased respect from their children. However, in a minority of cases, spousal resistance and child distress were reported.

In a similar vein, Katz (1976) found that among female returning students, on-going support by spouses and children were crucial to student success. Among these respondents, some 62% reported unequivocal spousal support, 20% partial support and 5% outright opposition. Among those reporting spousal support, university attendance was associated with improvement in marital satisfaction and communication, closer family relations, and increased self-reliance among the children.

Bers and Smith-Bandy (1987) found that the motive for returning to university varied by gender. Among female students, it was typically associated with a change in the family, including the departure of an adolescent child, marital separation or divorce or other changes in the quality and character of the marital relationship, either positive or negative. Among male students, it typically reflected a change in employment, including a new position or the opportunity for advancement in the same company.

Huston-Hoberg and Strange (1986) examined re-entry and spousal support. They found that type of support varied by gender. Husbands were most likely to provide emotional support whereas wives were most likely to provide functional support. Perhaps even more important than the actual support provided was the manner in which this was perceived by students. In general, female students were more likely than their male counterparts to perceive a discrepancy between their own and their spouses' attitudes toward re-entry. Put differently, this suggests that whereas male students saw their spouses as supportive of their efforts, female students saw their spouses as only reluctantly supportive or actively resistant. Similarly, both Van Meter and Agronow (1982) and Berkove (1979) found that returning female students who fail to receive spousal support not only associate their academic efforts with greater stress, but are also at higher risk of failing than those who receive such support

One consequence of the lack of support may be student depression. This was the focus of the work of Roehl and Okun (1984) among female students. They found that depression was related to both negative life events and weak social support systems, with support and life events themselves correlated. This combination of variables accounted for 58% of the explained variance with respect to depression among mature students.

Social Pathology

A recent epidemiological survey (Weiner, 1980) shows that social pathology is by no means uncommon among secondary school and university-age populations in the United States. This includes 10% of all cases of clinical depression, 12% of all unsuccessful suicide attempts and 6% of all successful suicides. Perhaps for this reason, there is a substantial literature concerning various "problems" among university students. Below, I will attend to those studies which link such problems to family processes. In addition, a handful of reports which explore the utility of family therapy with this population will be reviewed.

Neurosis. Schwartz and Getter (1980) examine the basis of neurosis and "major" pathology (eg. schizophrenia) among a sample of university undergraduates. Their data revealed that such problems were directly linked to family interaction processes and, moreover, were differentiated on the basis of gender. Pathology among female students was associated with intense parent-child conflict in father-dominated families. Similar problems among male students was also associated with conflict, but in mother-dominated families. Note that these findings are consistent with the work of Wesley and Epstein (1969) reported earlier.

Depression. Lopez et al. (1986) explored the relationship between parent-child interaction, adjustment and depression among male and female students. In doing so, the authors distinguished between "conflictual" and "emotional" independence. Whereas the former was seen as associated with guilt, resistance and anger, the latter was conceptualized in terms of approval and closeness. Among other things, the findings showed that (1) adjustment was associated with conflictual independence from fathers among boys, but emotional independence from father among girls; (2) among boys, there was no relationship between adjustment or psychological separation and depression; and (3) among girls, "high" separation was associated with low depression but also low adjustment. The authors speculate that father-son conflict may facilitate separation and adjustment among boys, but that similar conflict among girls will likely retard their appropriate separation and adjustment.

In a related effort, Lopez (1986) found that depression among students tends to be associated with families characterized by parental over-involvement, role reversal (ie., parentification of the student), marital instability, and cross-generational coalitions pitting the over-involved parent and the student against the other parent. The dysfunction which often arises from such triangular coalitions has been recognized in the family therapy literature, particularly in the work of Jay Haley (1976, 1980). This contrasts with the work of Schwartz and Zuroff (1979) who found that depression among female students was primarily associated with parental, especially paternal, inconsistency regarding the expression of love and affection.

Loneliness. Schultz and Moore (1987) explored the subject of loneliness among university students. Their findings suggest that it may be grounded in dysfunctional parent-child interaction: irrespective of gender, extremely lonely students came from families characterized by both "high" parental control and parental rejection. Among females, it was especially associated with maternal rejection and psychological control.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse. Perkins and Berkowitz (1987) explored the family correlates of student alcoholism. The findings revealed a significant positive association between student and parental drinking patterns. One consequence of student alcohol abuse was impaired social relations between these students and their same-age peers (see also Berkowitz & Perkins, 1986).

Biggs et al. (1974) explored the relationship between the pattern of student use of alcohol and marijuana, and their attitudes towards their parents. The findings indicated that student attitudes towards their parents were related to their use of marijuana but not alcohol. Whereas patterns of alcohol use by parents and students were similar, student use of marijuana was more similar to that of their same-age peers since use of this drug was inconsistent with parental norms.

The issue of whether student marijuana use involves students modelling parental behaviour or deviating from it was the subject of a survey by Tec (1974). The findings point to a consistent relationship between parental and student drug use patterns, with drug use by students associated with life dissatisfaction and "low parental saliency", that is, student perception that their parents attach little importance to drug use. "High" student drug use was predicted best by the combination of family deviance and parental drug use.

In a similar vein, Barnes (1977) provides evidence in support of a parental modelling theory of student alcohol use. The findings show that parental behaviour is the best predictor of student alcohol use. Further, students who abused alcohol were more tolerant than those who did not abuse it of other deviant acts, and expressed their willingness in engage in such acts (see also Johnston, 1974; Jessor & Jessor, 1973). In short, parents who support deviant acts - or, are at least perceived by their adolescent children to do so - will likely have children who engage in such acts and are tolerant of their commission.

Crisis Reaction. Houston et al. (1980) examined the basis for crisis reactions among freshman undergraduates, most of whom were living in residence and away from home for the very first time. The results suggest that level of family support, distance from home, the desire to return home for a visit and the degree to which these students were dependent on their parents were all helpful in understanding this condition. Similarly, Wright (1985) demonstrates a link between family dynamics, student crises, and suicidal ideation. Some 6% of the students in the author's study reported seriously considering taking their own life.

Using case history data, Held and Bellows (1983) move beyond "modelling theory" to provide a more complex explanation of the relationship between family processes and student crisis reactions. In their sample, student dysfunction reflected response to a family "bind" (see Bateson et al., 1956). On the one hand, they were typically members of an enmeshed or overly close family (see Minuchin, 1974) in which unfulfilled parental aspirations were covertly transmitted to their student offspring. On the other hand, they were confronted with an implicit prohibition against change, growth or development in relation to the on-going conflict which typically characterized their parents fragile marital relationship. In other words, in accord with a classic "bind", these students were put in the wrong whatever they did. To do well in university was to make their parents proud of them but

contravened the prohibition against change. Conversely, to do nothing or to fail academically would be to comply with the prohibition, but would simultaneously crush their parents vicarious hopes of achievement and success (see also Laing & Esterson, 1964).

But the picture does not end there. While one child, the identified patient (IP) was caught in the on-going marital struggle, other siblings were thus freed to opt out of this triangle and thus escape dysfunction. The special significance of these IPs may have resulted from the fact that most had been born either following a miscarriage, the death of a sibling or the death of a family member. They were, in addition, often the first member of the family to have gone to university which, in turn, often required a major financial sacrifice on the family's part. Thus, these IPs were typically the oldest child and so held the final responsibility for academic success or were the youngest child and so were their family's last chance for success.

Taking this complex constellation of family processes into account, the authors argue that the crisis reaction of these students was in fact a cry for help, a last ditch attempt to alter their family's dysfunctional structure before it could destroy them utterly. Indeed, being pulled apart by forcestoo powerful for them to control, the risk of suicide among these students was a very real one.

Family Dysfunction. The studies cited above focus on particular problem categories; an alternate approach is to attempt to locate students on a continuum of family functioning. This suggests that the discovery of students at some extreme may point to a group that is either presently experiencing difficulty or is at risk for later dysfunction. A case in point is the pilot work of the Student Environment Study Group at the University of Guelph, Ontario (Canada) in which I participated as the research coordinator. This involved completion of Olson's (1986) FACES III instrument. The instrument is grounded on the circumplex model (Olson et al., 1983) derived on the basis of a cross-national study of over 2000 American families some of whom had one or more adolescent members. The model holds that families may be characterized by their position on two intersecting (ie., orthogonal) dimensions: adaptability (flexibility) and cohesion (emotional bonding). Families least likely to develop problems are those closest to the centre and are characterized as "balanced". Those at greater risk of problems are further from the centre and characterized as "mid-range". Finally, those at the extremes of either or both dimensions, and thus characterized as "extreme", are thought to be at increased risk of dysfunction. Family assessment using FACES III is best done through completion of the instrument by two or more family members. In our study, completed in 1986, this was not possible; rather, our sample consisted of over 100 undergraduates.

The pilot study in question revealed that some 30% of our respondents are members of balanced families, another 45% belong to mid-range families, while 25% were in the extreme range. Among the latter, most involved families with very low cohesion, what Minuchin (1974) has called "disengaged" and what Olson (1986) refers to as "chaotically" or "rigidly" disengaged.

In a similar vein, Hoffman and Weiss (1987) examined the relationship between family dynamics and non-clinical presenting problems among university students. The results revealed a direct relationship between (1) marital conflict among parents and distress among their adolescent offspring,

especially among females; and (2) parent distress and child distress, with level of child dependence an important mediating variable. Finally, whereas distress on the part of both fathers and mothers had an additive impact upon females, upon males distress in one or both parents had an equal effect.

Family Therapy. Finally, a small literature exists which explores the use of various forms of family therapy in an effort to assist students presenting with one or more of the problems noted above. It should be noted that this approach to personal counselling is unusual; most such counselling across North America involves individual psychotherapy (Fulmer & Medalie, 1987; eg. see Talley & Rockwell, 1986).[6]

Openlander and Searight (1983), emphasize this point, arguing that personal counselling with university students has been heavily influenced by traditional intrapsychic notions of human problems coupled with the view that parental influence fades to insignificance as students enter and engage in university life. Taken together, these orientations have not only mitigated against reference to the family in the developmental literature, but have also resulted in infrequent use of family therapy. In an effort to counteract this trend, the authors present a number of case histories which cogently demonstrate the utility of this treatment approach. The authors use of family therapy involves individual counselling which attempts to reframe student presenting problems (ie., change the meaning of these problems) from a family perspective. In each of these cases, significant improvement in the presenting complaint(s) resulted. The authors conclude that such an approach has programmatic implications in such diverse areas as vocational guidance, athletics, academic advising and housing by providing a potent model for student problem solving (see also Davis & Schubert, 1980).

In a similar vein, Goodyear (1980) explores the programmatic implications of divergent epistemologies as represented in different counselling approaches. Traditional counselling, insists the author, is based on a linear epistemology which focuses on the individual seen in social isolation. It thus accepts clients punctuation of the interactional sequences in which they are involved. Conversely, a systemic perspective adopts a circular epistemology which views clients in the social context of which they are a part. In particular, this calls attention to the influential role of the family and, thus, the need to shift from individual counselling to family therapy.

Whiting (1981) extends this argument by tying together family therapy, the life cycle transitions associated with a developmental model of the family, and student attrition. The result, the author suggests, is a radical approach to student intervention. Moreover, like Openlander and Searight (1983), above, Whiting argues that this need not involve seeing the entire family. Rather, in keeping with a

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[6] *This authoritative text on counselling and psychotherapy with college students mentions neither family therapy nor family processes in its index.*

strategic approach to therapy (see Watzlawick et al., 1974; Bross & Benjamin, 1983), the counsellor sees only the student but thinks systemically in effecting change (see Fulmer & Medalie, 1982).[7]

Discussion

This complex array of findings, conclusions and speculations raise a number of issues pertinent to both theory and practice.

Theory. First, the findings reviewed above clearly suggest that parental influence on student behaviour neither ceases nor diminishes during the latter's attendance at university. This contrasts with much that has been written under the aegis of student development theory (Benjamin, 1986). While no developmental theorist has, to my knowledge, ever stated explicitly that family influences are irrelevant to student develop, their alternate focus on processes such as separation, individuation and independence has made such an inference difficult to escape. Such a view appears to see factors which influence student development more in terms of propinquity than in terms either of meaning or salience. Given that higher education often involves "going away to college", this can only mean decreased contact between student and family and increased interaction between student, peers and faculty. Moreover, while the intention of a university education has always been to change those who attend, the advent of student development theory has given this goal a sharper and more explicit focus. From this perspective, it is but a small logical leap to conclude that development theory **should** correctly concern itself with the immediate influences in the university environment; more distant influences, such as those associated with the family, can safely be ignored.

Such a model, while internally consistent and coherent, remains substantively **misguided.** On one level, this statement is an empirical one: the data reviewed above, both in detail and in their entirety, fail to support the traditional developmental view summarized immediately above. On another level, I believe the problem is **not** one of logic, but rather one of epistemology. It is reasonable only insofar as one assumes that the individual is the central unit of analysis, and that it is conceptually defensible to think in terms of individuals each seen one at a time **and** in social isolation. An alternate view, more in keeping with available data, is that "the individual" is as arbitrary a way of punctuating human experience as is any other grouping, **and** that it is more useful to think in terms of social units set in particular contexts.

From this latter view, students can be seen not merely as members of their family; rather, students are defined by their family membership and, in turn, help define the family systems in which they participate. In this sense, students carry their family around with them in their head. In part at least, these internalized family "ghosts" share their university experience, influence their choices and

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[7] *For further discussion of family therapy with university students, see Arnstein (1980), Babineau (1975), Beardslee et al. (1983), Elson (1964), Fulmer et al. (1982), and Knauth (1981).*

decisions, shape their perceptions and feelings, and underwrite their assumptions, expectations and presumptions about the nature of their social world. As Bank et al. (1987) put it,

> Undergraduates live in a cognitive world in which they consider what others expect of them, including others **like parents** who are not present on campus. These thoughts help undergraduates to form behaviourial intentions." (Emphasis added).

Second, data have been examined above which call attention to the influential role of siblings. Given the rarity with which student-sibling relations have been explored, siblings may be seen as forgotten family members in student development theory. This is extremely unfortunate given the significance I believe these data deserve, especially as regards the issue of **differentiation**. There is a tendency to treat family members - when they are examined at all - as all of a piece. This presumption now appears incorrect; rather, families represent highly differentiated systems. With regard to some issues, students depend on and feel closest to their parents; in other cases it is their siblings they go to for advice, support and nurturance. The extent to which sibling influence may be developmentally significant is simply not known. However, these findings do help explain one basis upon which a given adolescent may develops "problems" while leaving their siblings trouble free. Data reviewed above suggest that each family member operates in a unique microenvironment despite the fact that they are all part of the same family system. It appears that the relations which define their membership may vary dramatically from one relationship to the other. For various reasons, a particular adolescent may come to have special symbolic significance for his or her parents. Consequently, that adolescent's relationship with his or her parents will likely be very different than that of their siblings. Indeed, it is not difficult to conceive of a child who "deliberately" places him or herself in such a position precisely in order to shield the others from exposure to parental pathology.

It is hard to imagine that these bases of differentiation would not impact on the developmental course of the individuals in question. In turn, it seems reasonable to assume that variation in such on-going relationships would help shape their experience of the university environment.

Third, data reviewed above support the conclusion that another basis of family differentiation is that of gender. It would now appear that boys and girls experience family life in quite different ways and, concomitantly, their developmental requirements may be different. Boys appear to grow and develop best with one kind of relationship with their fathers and quite a different relationship with their mothers. The same appears true of girls, with those appropriate for girls unlike those appropriate for boys. It remains unclear how these differences may be complicated still further by family variations on the basis of social class, ethnicity, race, culture and even child age (see Ardener, 1975). One thing seems clear: systematic variation in parent-child interaction between adolescent boys and girls likely predicts concomitant variation in their developmental course.

Finally, family influence appears to be both direct and indirect. The salience of the marital relationship is a case in point. If parents may serve as a model for gender-related behaviour, then marital interaction may serve as an equally potent model of social interaction. This suggests that certain

patterns of marital interaction may prepare adolescents well to cope with the social rigors of university life while others may be less useful, with some patterns quite destructive. Moreover, marital and parent-child interaction are typically interdependent. Satisfying marital relations may support and enhance parenting and vice versa, while insulating the children from the less salutary aspects of parents marital relations. Conversely, despite their best efforts to the contrary, children, especially adolescents, are often fully aware of difficulty in their parent's marital relationship (Irving & Benjamin, 1987), with potentially deleterious effects. One such variation is that marital arrangement known as "triangulation", in which adolescents, wittingly or otherwise, become participants in their parents' marital dynamics, invariably with dysfunctional consequences. Put differently, this is to suggest that one aspect of variation in the dynamics of marital relations is the extent of adolescent involvement in such relations, including adolescents who are students living away from home. It is, I believe, unreasonable to believe that such involvement is irrelevant to student development. Rather, the impact of such involvement will not only flow through the family via parenting, but reach out to shape students' experience of the university environment. In turn, the salience and character of that effect will determine (1) the extent to which students are impervious or responsive to the university environment and, in recursive fashion (2) the extent to which the impact of the university experience will be carried by students back into their family systems as sources of variety (ie., information new to the system), which in turn may impact on students ... and so on, in an endless iterative loop.

Practice. The above review appears relevant to at least three areas of student services: **attrition, residence life, and personal counselling.**

In an era of fiscal restraint, institutions understandably take very seriously the prospect of losing through attrition anywhere from 25% to 40% or more of freshman students. As exemplified by the work of Tinto (1987), most theoretically-based responses stress the notion of "involvement" or "integration". This holds that for students to remain at a given institution through to graduation, they must in some way connect with those - administrators, service personnel, faculty and/or peers - already there.

In light of data reviewed above, this notion, while reasonable, is incomplete in at least two respects. As regards students, existing programs to combat attrition tend to see students in homogeneous terms, without regard to gender. Such differences, however, are manifest in the family literature. The fact that men and women tend to relate differently to parents and siblings suggests that they may very well have **at least some** divergent developmental requirements in university. This may, for example, include some aspects of freshman orientation, residence requirements (see below), program and academic counselling, personal counselling (see below), curriculum planning, classroom structure, and the degree of parental involvement. The specific programmatic implications of this view are far from clear, since gender based differences are only now coming to be recognized in the higher education research literature (eg. Gilligan, 1982). It does suggest, however, that in future gender-based research should have institutional priority, with the involvement of service personnel likely crucial to its conceptualization and implementation; more about this in a later section.

I noted above that programs to combat attrition were deficient in two respect. The second concerns the involvement of parents (and, where appropriate, siblings). Here, Tinto's (1987) use of the term "external communities" to characterize parents is, I believe, representative of programmatic approaches across North America: parents are largely ignored. Yet the anecdotal comments of service personnel, noted in the introduction to this paper, together with data reviewed above, suggest that (1) for the majority of students, especially freshman, parents are already very much involved with the life of their student offspring; and (2) that involvement, far from being deleterious, may contribute positively to student involvement. The latter point has been well established at the primary and secondary school levels (Ziegler, 1987). It has yet to be accepted at the level of higher education.

This said, it is true, as I (Benjamin, 1986) and others (Komarovsky, 1985; Tinto, 1987) have noted, that there are occasions in which conflict between parents and students may contribute to attrition. These cases, however, will almost certainly represent a tiny minority; service personnel routinely tell of cases in which attrition would have occurred save for swift and decisive parental intervention. This suggests the need for proactive service programming to encourage initial and sustained parental involvement in the university career of their student offspring. Such programming should, in addition, go beyond existing efforts to merely inform parents about the experience of young people going away to university (see Ingalls, 1987) by recognizing and speaking to parents own concerns and interests vis-a-vis their children. It may also be useful to extend some of the thinking about students to parents: just as encouraging student involvement centres on connecting students to people on campus, so the same may apply to parents by assigning service staff as parental liaison. I suspect that active parent involvement in their student offspring's university career will be limited and only sporadic. At particular points, however, such as periods of crisis, their involvement may well mean the difference between persistence and attrition. It would be wasteful in the extreme to fail to take advantage of this available resource, for students, for parents and for service personnel.

Turning to residence life, the initial problem faced by residence life staff concerns the placement of in-coming freshman. Two or more students may be placed in the same room based solely on random assignment. Alternately, some initial screening may be undertaken in which roommates are matched on the basis of some shared attribute, for example, compatible scores on a personality inventory such as the Myers-Briggs Type Inventory.

Data reviewed above suggest a third possibility: roommate matching on the basis of reported family interaction processes. As we have seen, family systems display extraordinary variation in characteristics interaction patterns, with each adolescent socialized in a unique microenvironment. Assuming that such variations show systematic regularities, as they appear to do, family interaction pattern may be a more reliable index of roommate compatibility than any other measure used thus far. Consider the female freshman from an enmeshed or overly involved family. For her, a relatively intrusive style of relating is seen as "friendly". Her roommate, in contrast, may come from a detached or overly distant family. For her, a relatively distant style of relating is seen as "respectful of privacy". In interaction, the first adolescent may well perceive the other as "a cold, insensitive snob" while the

second sees the other as "pushy, insensitive and demanding" - in short, a prescription for a matching failure. Prior screening for characteristic interaction pattern, by avoiding such combinations, may increase the proportion of compatible roommate matching, thus making the task of residence life staff that much easier.

The final area in which reviewed data appear relevant concerns personal counselling. At present, only a small proportion of students seek the assistance of these professionals, just under 10% at the University of Guelph in Ontario (Canada). Across North America, the traditional response to a student in distress has been to assess their presenting problem(s) from an individual perspective and, when necessary, initiate a course of individual psychotherapy. Data reviewed above suggests that an unknown proportion of these students will present with problems rooted in the specific dynamics of their family systems. Two consequences flow from this fact: first, that a successful outcome will be quite unlikely using individual psychotherapy with such cases; and, second, that family therapy techniques will better suited to such problems.

For personal counsellors, these conclusions do not suggest that family therapy be used with all students; student presenting problems will have diverse origins such that individual psychotherapy methods will still be appropriate in a large number of cases. However, these conclusions do imply that all personal counsellors be acquainted with family assessment and intervention techniques so that students with family-related problems may be offered the assistance they need. Further, the notion that family therapy necessarily involves seeing the entire family is now obsolete. Modern methods, especially those operating from a strategic perspective, see only the student, but apply a family systems perspective in the therapeutic process. The results, based on a limited literature with respect to university populations, is a high probability of successful outcome.

Before moving on to the postgraduation phase, a caveat is in order with respect to the practice implications noted above. This turns on the distinction between practice reality and legal reality. Parent involvement at the primary and secondary school levels is not problematic because the students in question are legally minors; their parents have a right to intervene should they choose to do so. The reverse is true among university students the vast majority of whom are adults in the eyes of the law. In this sense, policies and/or programs geared to encourage parental involvement raise delicate and complex legal issues concerning the respective rights and (legal) responsibilities of the institution, the parents and the students. Speaking as a legal layman, I do not presume to have definitive answers; these will have to be worked through as circumstances require. What I can and do say, however, is that available data point unequivocally to the conclusion that family systems have and will continue to impact significantly on student development through the university years. We can, in accord with traditional notions of student development, simply ignore this source of influence and deal in our day-to-day practice with its consequences, positive and negative. Better, in my view, is to see such influence for what it can be, namely, a powerful resource available to student service staff to be used for the benefit of both students and practitioners.

POSTGRADUATION

The final phase of students' university career begins on graduation, hence the postgraduation label. The literature here is voluminous, but largely centred on the relationship between skills acquisition in university and subsequent vocational success. The importance of family influences, whether of the family of origin (ie., the birth family) or of procreation (ie., the marriage family), appears scarcely at all. Yet there are a handful of studies or reviews which do attend to family processes, and repeatedly demonstrate that we would be most unwise to discount their importance or assume that such processes are irrelevant to adult development.

Livson and Peskin (1980), in a review concerned with adult development, report longitudinal data which show a link between cognitive develop among female adolescents and their cognitive capacity in the age range 37-47 years. The authors found the "cognitive strength" of these women in adolescence was unremarkable. However, their cognitive development with increasing age and maturity was significant. Of interest in the present context was the finding that the strength of the correlation between their performance in adolescence and adulthood increased in direct proportion to the distance between those two time periods. In other words, Livson and Peskin suggest that events and processes in adolescent took on increasing significance with time and age.

As part of their review, Mifflen and Mifflen (1982) report a direct relationship between adolescent SES and postgraduate economic success defined in terms of dollar earnings. This revealed that students in the lowest SES decile had a 0.1% chance of placing in the top 10% of American wage earners. Conversely, those in the top decile had a 2.8% chance of achieving such economic success. Given the evidence in previous sections that the effects of social class tend to be mediated by parental influence, these data imply that the postgraduation influence of the family continues to be substantial.

This inference is further supported and elaborated by the longitudinal data of Sewell and Hauser (1980). Their 1975 follow-up data revealed the following: (1) females obtained a first job with higher status than their male counterparts, but with a narrower range in status variation; (2) both males and females achieved similar educational outcomes; (3) at first, females received a poorer return on their educational investment than males, however, by mid-life, they had achieved greater occupational status in relation to education; (4) by contrast, male occupational achievement was less tied to education than females and more related to personal job experience; and (5) in general, male status aspiration exhibited greater long-term parental influence than that of females.

Parental influence is not merely limited to occupational and status achievement. Rather, White (1976) shows that parental expectations and family experiences shape mate selection both before and after graduation.

Finally, Schulenberg et al. (1984) review the scanty literature which links family processes with postgraduation vocational development. Among other things, this shows that (1) SES, aspiration and vocational attainment are all linked, especially among males; (2) family structural variables, such as size, resources, intactness, education and so on, have a potent effect on aspiration and later achievement;

(3) parent-child occupational continuity is the norm (cf. Astin, 1978); (4) family relations also seem important, with postgraduation vocational success associated with parental vocational success, close parent-child ties, and parental vocationally-relevant attitudes and values, especially those of fathers; and (5) the preceding emphasis on the importance of parent-child interaction has been confirmed longitudinally, especially in the work of Mortimer (1974; Mortimer & Kumka, 1982). The authors conclude that the link between family relations and the long-term vocational development of their offspring is a potent one that is only now beginning to be the subject of research. A lacuna of particular importance concerns the relationship between vocational development and specific patterns of family interaction, such as those revealed by Olson's (1975) FACES instrument, already cited above with respect to our on-going research at the University of Guelph, Ontario (Canada).

Discussion

While obviously thin and uneven, these data nevertheless support several tentative implications with respect to theory and practice.

Theory. The first and perhaps the most important is that the relationship between family processes and postgraduation adult development has been sadly neglected. This is disappointing because this area appears to hold a good deal of promise for understanding adult human development in general and vocational development in particular. Necessarily, this implies that setting off the four years of university as somehow unique and more important than that which precedes or follows it is likely to be seriously misleading. Rather, the developmental impact of the university experience not only appears to vary on a continuum, but that development must share the credit with a range of influences, the family relationship vital among them.

One important focus of that influence is that set of values, norms and attitudes collectively associated with social class. Put differently, this is to suggest that it is extraordinarily difficult, as Sewell and Hauser (1980) put it, to escape the effects of class, evidently throughout the life cycle. Nowhere is this more evident than with respect to occupational achievement. Note that even here, following graduation, family influences continue to be felt, although still as only one among a range of influential processes. For example, the interaction between family social class and child gender continues to be evident, although in the postgraduation phase it is complicated by the biases built-in to the structure of the work place.

Similarly, parental expectations appear to impact on mate selection, although the exact manner of that influence is still poorly understood. As important, the influence of postgraduation students' spouses, independent of either set of parents, is still in shadow. Assuming that the allegiance of students should gradually shift from parents to spouse, spousal influence should be substantial, as should the degree of concordance between spouse and parents (and parents-in-law). In short, family relationships do not click on and click off in dichotomous fashion. Rather, they tend to be continuous, becoming both elaborated (on some dimensions) and attenuated (on other dimensions) as social net-

works expand and contract through time, including the continuation of parental influence as married postgraduation students give birth to the next generation of students.

Finally, I can only echo Schulenberg et al. (1984) in calling for research into the relationship between adult development and substantively specific patterns of family interaction. If such processes can have such potent effects during the "attendance" phase, than it is unreasonable to suppose that the same should not be true during postgraduation, indeed throughout the life cycle. What appear to be needed are efforts which tie **specific** family interactional processes with **specific** expectations, ambitions, attitudes, values, skills and abilities. Indeed, assertions such as I have made above concerning variation in the relative influence of university and family imply systematic variation in subsequent development of vocational, cognitive, social and other attributes and processes traditionally regarded as developmentally significant.

Practice. Data reviewed above are relevant to at least three areas of practice: **vocational counselling, postgraduation placement, and continuity.**

With respect to vocational counselling, at present, in accord with developmental theory, this is very much oriented to the individual student. While seeking such counselling may be variously assessed, this typically concentrates on both personality attributes as well as self-reported vocational interests and concerns. The student who, for examples, tests as "outgoing and likes people", for example, may be told that "sales" or "social work" may be appropriate vocational choices. In turn, such information may be used by the student in question as one guide to program selection.

Data reviewed above suggest that this approach to vocational assessment and counselling may be shortsighted. While individual choice remains relevant, standards and values which appear to guide choice appear to be rooted in large part in the patterns which characterize their family of birth and/or marriage. These relations appear to significantly influence both vocational aspiration in general and vocational attainment in particular, with parent-child vocational continuity commonplace. Thus implies that vocational counsellors include some form of family assessment as part of their contribution to student service delivery. In some cases, this may include explicitly asking for the participation of either the family of birth and/or marriage. Where this is impractical, various self-report measures are currently available which assess family functioning.

A related shift in orientation is suggested with respect to placement service personnel. Their task to help match graduating students with suitable employment. In this regard, various resources are brought to bear, including devices for job searching as well as existing lists of jobs recently acquired by past graduates. These methods may be quite appropriate. They remain incomplete, however, insofar as they fail to see families of birth and/or marriage as additional resources which may be used. Given the link between SES and vocational achievement, and that between parent-child vocational continuity, it seems reasonable to see parents as having a significant role to play in vocational placement. It is at present unclear, for example, how frequently graduating students use parental assistance in finding employment, with no assistance whatever from vocational placement. It seems reasonable to expect that

this may be an area in which placement personnel have much to learn from their students, rather than vice versa.

Finally, a word about continuity. The developmental trajectory of students during their university career is not necessarily smooth. Most students will undergo considerable change; some will change little. Most students will gradually shift their alleg-family assessment as part of their contribution to student service delivery. In some cases, this may include explicitly asking for the participation of either the family of birth and/or marriage. Where this is impractical, various self-report measures are currently available which assess family functioning.

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Finally, a word about continuity. The developmental trajectory of students during their university career is not necessarily smooth. Most students will undergo considerable change; some will change little. Most students will gradually shift their allegiance from parents to spouse, in the process discovering a new way to interact with parents as adults; for some the potence of their relations with parents will be so great as to blunt the process of maturation and change. And the impact of chance should not be neglected, of events and people who literally change the subsequent life course.

But in general, developmental continuity will be the norm. I take this to mean that development is broadly predictable and relatively orderly. This is an ideas which is familiar to student service personnel since it is consistent with traditional student development theory. However, in the light of data reviewed above, the traditional basis of that predictability, individual student attributes, appear significantly less useful than was previously thought. Instead, in the effort to assist students, both individual and family process appear to be equally relevant. For those who are accustomed to confining their attention to events and persons within the campus environment, the notion of extending ones horizon to include events and processes beyond the university may be disturbing, and thus rejected. This is, of course, the choice of every service professional. To do so, however, it now appears, is to risk providing students with less adequate service than they deserve and which service staff can offer. It also means rejecting - in the person of parents, siblings and spouses - a source of energy and assistance which, in most cases, will only serve to lighten the already considerable burden student service staff routinely carry.

IMPLICATIONS

Student development theory has become enormously influential. Acceptance of its central tenets shapes policy and programming in universities and colleges across North America. In important ways, the assertions of its proponents have impacted significantly on the course and direction of much fundamental research as well as the day-to-day practice of a host of student service professionals.

Given that a central concern of proponents of this theoretical perspective is the well being and guided maturation of students, it seems only reasonable that student development theory be subject to periodic critical review in order to ensure its continued validity and practical utility. While this involves issues of consistency and coherence, it also includes concern for errors and omissions.

In this context, the present paper has been guided by four critical themes:

1. influences which shape the development of students while in university are not limited to events and processes confined to the university campus; rather, they extend to include the role of parents and siblings. The salience of the interaction patterns which characterize relations between family members cannot be exaggerated, for they literally define each member, both for others as well as for themselves. In turn, such processes significantly shape how student offspring will experience and respond (or fail to respond) to events and processes within the university context, especially those that are social in character.
2. The university context, however, is not universally accessible to all, whatever the applicable entry requirements. Instead, structural characteristics of society, especially those related to social class, create a systematic bias which disproportionately favour students whose background includes high socioeconomic status (SES). The effects of social status appear to be mediated by various social factors, chief among them the characteristics of the family, and especially parental attitudes, values and expectations. While parents of all social classes want the best for their children, including higher education, only high SES parents realistically expect that their hopes will actually be achieved. Indeed, even when low SES students do attend university, these same mix of attitudes and expectations - typically in conjunction with weak academic skills - will mean a much lower probability of graduation compared to their high SES counterparts. These consequences of class will extend beyond university to predict lifetime vocational achievement among low and high SES populations.
3. Patterns of child and adolescent socialization do not only show variations across family systems. Such variations also include within-family variations, as each child is socialized within a relationship-specific microenvironment. This is especially apparent with respect to gender. Males and females each have systematically different relationships with their mothers and fathers. Along some dimensions, cross-sex relations are most influential, with mothers shaping the behaviour of their sons while fathers have the same effect upon their daughters. Along other

dimensions, same-sex relations will be most important. Such differences in socialization will translate into academic differences in higher education. Men compared to women will tend to have different programmatic interests, will tend to report higher educational aspiration and will be more likely to attend graduate school.

4. Finally, while in university, a minority of students will experience emotional distress of varying degrees of severity and intensity, including loneliness, depression, drug and alcohol abuse, crisis and even suicide or psychosis. In some cases, these problems, especially those at the "mild" end of the spectrum, will be entirely situational, in response to the rigors of university life, and will tend to be fleeting. In an unknown proportion, these problems can be traced directly to on-going dysfunction in the family systems of which these students are a member, and will tend to be more persistent.

Taken together, the thrust of these themes has been to call attention to what I suggest is a serious omission in student development theory, namely, systematic inattention to the developmental influence of family systems. By my deliberate use of the word "system", I intend to explain the ultimate source of that omission in the theory's epistemological base, that is, those fundamental assumptions which determine how we should understand the nature of the social world.

On the one hand, this is to assert that family systems, as a source of developmental influence, are at least as important as any other sources of influence students are likely to encounter throughout an average four year university career. On the other hand, it is to assert that a systemic epistemology, with its emphasis on social units and dynamic contextual processes, is more consistent with available family data than the more linear assumptions of student development theory as it is currently formulated.

In closing, I will explore the consequences of both of these assertions for student development theory. In light of the findings reviewed above, I will also examine the implications of this paper for institutional research as well as for the six areas of practice noted previously.

Student Development Theory Re-Visited

The naive observer assumes that data more or less speaks for itself, and that the task of theory is therefore merely to assemble and organize what is readily apparent. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. While it is true that theory and data necessarily interact, in the normal course of events theory is necessarily preeminent. It is theory - or more exactly, the specific epistemological frame within which each theory is set - which operates to shape our perception of data. In this sense, given the virtually infinite array of observations available, theory always acts to restrict by specifying what shall be regarded as real or significant in the world and what may safety be disregarded.

My account of student development theory in the introduction of this paper accords with this description. The penchant of student development theorists for individual description and for investigations restricted to events within the orbit of the university campus constitutes a particular

epistemology. It selects events and process regarded as relevant and discards those seen as irrelevant. Heretofore, this has included all or at least most sources of influence originating outside the university, including those associated with family systems. This omission is hardly accidental; rather, it is systematic, consistent and nearly comprehensive. In short, it has been in keeping with the particular epistemology which has supplied the moving force, however implicit, for this body of theory.

In calling attention to family systems, then, I am not merely noting a substantive lacuna in the theory. Rather, I am suggesting that the error is epistemological and thus fundamental. In its place, I put forward an alternate set of epistemological assumptions which derive from modern systems theory (see Benjamin, 1983). In the introduction to this paper, it was appropriate to describe these assumptions as "background hypotheses". Given the review just completed, however, it seems reasonable to assess how well or poorly these assumptions have fared.

In essence, they argue that human development quintessentially involves reciprocal social interaction and, moreover, that all such processes take place in and are defined by some larger social context. Despite the fragmented and often scattered literatures from which this review was constituted, the data consistently support this epistemological perspective.

These data show repeatedly and consistently that (1) family interaction is reciprocal; (2) the family system is the social nexus which has the prime responsibility for the socialization of offspring; (3) socialization processes are pervasive, impacting to some degree on virtually all of those attributes traditionally regarded as relevant to student development (eg. self-esteem, autonomy, morality, maturity, integration); (4) the family system tends to be highly differentiated, with family members each growing and maturing within unique microenvironments as a function of the relationships in which they are each involved; (5) in some contexts parents are prepotent in their impact on their offspring, while, in other contexts, this status is held by siblings; (6) parents interact with their child each in their own unique way, so that some relationships may facilitate development while others may actually retard it; (7) both directly and indirectly, the character and quality of parental marital relations may profoundly impact on child development, again, for good or ill; (8) family systems show enormous variation; (9) family systems do not operate in a social vacuum any more than its members do within each system; (10) social class, ethnocultural membership, relations with significant others (eg. peers) and historical epoch all constitute significant exogenous sources of influence which, in turn, impact on intrasystemic family functioning; (11) the primary mechanism of intergenerational influence appears to be the patterned relations between family members on the levels of behaviour, affect and meaning; and (12) all family members, by definition, carry within them some representation of the family system of which they are a member, often outside their own awareness, which cannot **not** shape the manner in which they perceive, interpret and interact with the social world, including the specialized world of the university campus.

If these observations are reasonable - and they seem so in light of this review - than a profound shift in student development theory is called for. This would involve at least the following three changes.

First, an epistemological shift would be required, at the very least from linear to circular notions of causality. Operationally, this is a call for a theory more attuned to interaction in the world as opposed to that which currently dominates, namely, interaction the mind of each student. This move, from the inside to the outside, has itself profound implications. For example, in its present form, development theory is imposed on empirical data, artificially separating events and deliberately decontextualizing them. A circular approach would, instead, describe what actually occurs, thus making for a richer and more balanced interaction between theory and data. One example concerns the on-going involvement of family processes in the life of students. The fact that such processes have failed to receive attention in the theory literature is simply because they are defined by that theory as irrelevant; they are defined out of existence. But follow any body of students about for any length of time and their concern for and their involvement with their families of origin becomes only too apparent. A circular approach would have its proponents search for just such empirical data.

Second, this approach would require development theory to become more complex, by which I mean include within its aegis a range of factors which it now systematically excludes. While I call attention to a number of such factors elsewhere (Benjamin, 1986), here it will be sufficient to attend to factors associated with family systems. A case in point concerns the degree of family dysfunction. Present development theory assumes that student responsiveness to events in the university environment will vary primarily as a function of student maturation level, that is, the significance of an external event will be determine by an internal one. Data reviewed above, however, suggests that on-going processes in the family may be at least as important. Put differently, the data suggest that the university experience facilitates the development of some students because the patterns they carry within them from their family either encourage this or at least do not prevent it from happening. Conversely, at the dysfunctional end of the spectrum, family patterns may be so potent and so intrusive as to virtually nullify the impact of the university experience. Examples such as this could be multiplied but need not: unless development theory begins to take account of such processes, and thus recognizes as significant a range of factors now excluded from view, it cannot hope to provide an adequate account of student development.

Third, a circular orientation would call attention to the issue of differentiation. Families, like the students which emerge from them, are not all of a piece. They vary systematically along a range of dimensions few of which are presently part of student development theory. Gender offers a good example. Heretofore, gender differences have been significantly attenuated within student development theory, with male norms typically used to set the standards of "normal" development. Further, it is widely assumed that whatever differences do obtain between the sexes can ultimately be traced to roots in biology. Data reviewed above suggests quite a different picture. Parents systematically differentiate between boys and girls, such that children of each gender literally grow up in divergent social worlds. Many fathers rough-house with girls, but, lest they be accused of homosexual leanings, confine their interaction with boys to a manly handshake and a verbal exchange of views. But boys require of their mothers a kind of emotional support and encouragement that these same mothers do not offer their

girls. Moreover, these differences appear to vary by social class and probably by ethnocultural group (see McGoldrick et al., 1982). Not surprisingly, then, boys and girls engage the world of the university in quite different ways that are only beginning to come into focus. This suggests that, insofar as development theory now disregards such differences, a circular orientation would highlight such differences and render them more precisely than is now the case.

Finally, a word is in order regarding systems theory. From time to time, efforts have been made to introduce systems theory to student service practitioners. Such efforts have invariably been half-hearted and decidedly partial. Either the exposition is highly specialized, dealing with a particular concept (eg. Caple, 1987a, 1987b), or it is overgeneralized, taking into account an entire epistemology in only a few short pages and offering no systematic critique (eg. Openlander & Searight, 1983). It is hardly surprising, therefore, that such efforts have met with little response, as readers socialized to accept current student development theory come away more puzzled than enlightened.

Still worse is the fact that systems theory does not, in fact, correspond to a universally accepted body of work. Rather, there are dozens of particular variations which, more or less, share the same epistemological base. It follows that even when systems theory is presented cogently, listeners or readers continue to be uncertain as to what is being referred to and how, if at all, it is relevant to student development theory.

I interpret such lack-lustre treatment of systems theory to the fact that heretofore, researchers have made no systematic effort to link the assumptive framework of systems theory to a serious critique and reformulation of student development theory. To the extent that this review and some of my previous work (see Benjamin, 1986) has successfully mounted such a critique and reformulation, I suggest that developmental theorists now have the conceptual tools with which to begin re-working student development theory along the systemic lines noted above.

The Institutional Research Enterprise

Given the size of the present review, the average reader might conclude that there is ample data available with respect to the link between student development and family systems. In fact, quite the opposite is true. Recall that the data reviewed above were culled from five literatures. Moreover, in most instances, disciplinary boundaries are respected by the researchers in any given area, thus reducing comparability. And, in most instances, student development per se was **not** the object of inquiry; rather, it has been my task to draw out such developmental inferences as seemed reasonable.

I conclude that the information base linking family systems with student development is markedly underdeveloped. This implies the need for both more resources and much more effort expended in order to gather such data as are required.

In turn, this raises two questions: what data gathering activities should be accorded priority? and what data collection methods appear most promising?

As for the first issue, my response is generic rather than substantive, that is, what is badly needed are data which link **specific** family interaction processes with **specific** developmentally relevant

outcomes. The importance of social support, for example, to buffer stress and to develop self-esteem, has been noted in the above review. But what sort of support? provided by whom? in what context? over what period of time? These are questions for which specific answers remain obscure. Are the answers likely to vary by social class? ethnocultural identity? gender? age? other as yet unspecified variables? And what of those students who fail to receive the support they need? What consequences are likely to follow? Are there specific characteristics or combinations of attributes likely to predict varying degrees of risk? The simple answer is that we don't know with any degree of confidence, and we need to know if family research is to contribute in a meaningfully way to the on-going evolution of student development theory.

As for the appropriate research methods, this is a highly problematic issue since what is seen as "appropriate" is likely to vary systematically along disciplinary lines. However, the above review does suggest four generic guidelines in keeping with the assumptive frame outlined above.

First, research methods must be in keeping with the phenomena under study. With regard to the family, interaction processes are typically reciprocal. It follows that methods which seek to derive inferences about family systems based on data derived from a single member will be highly vulnerable to error. Since self-report data using captive university students as subjects is virtually standard in several of the literatures examined, this calls in question much that now constitutes the family literature.

Second, research methods must be consistent with the level of interaction under investigation. This point assumes that family interaction involves different levels of abstraction, from meaning, to affect, to behaviour. No one method will be appropriate to capture data at all three levels at once. For example, the potence of family interaction patterns for their members resides in the fact that they typically operate outside the awareness of the members. It follows that self-report measures, while simple and inexpensive, will only say something about that limited range of events and processes that members explicitly perceive. This account, however, may not accord with those provided by other members nor that assembled by third party observers. Indeed, some combination of these accounts may be required to develop a three dimensional picture of the systems under scrutiny. Family insiders have one version while outside observers may have quite another, with neither account "truer" than the any other.

Third, research methods must be sensitive to systematic variation in context. The content and meaning of behaviour varies by the context within which it occurs. It follows that methods which ignore context may yield incomplete data. Here, consider the extent to which the behaviour of students is likely to vary when they are at home with their families as opposed to interacting with peers in residence. While there may very well be some crossover in both settings, significant variation may be expected. What differences exist - and what similarities obtain - will only become apparent when both contexts are compared. Such studies, at least with respect to university populations, remain quite rare. Moreover, the task may yield different findings when applied to the same group seen in different

settings. It follows that efforts at methodological triangulation may well yield superior results to the use of any one method of data collection used throughout.

Finally, method must be selected which are sensitive to the temporal variation of behaviour. Interaction pattern are only stable over the short term; over the long term, as we have seen above, they are likely to undergo elaboration and transformation. Such data are of the utmost importance if we truly believe that students **develop** through time. Yet longitudinal data are the most difficult and costly to obtain. Serious commitment to a developmental perspective,however, leaves no meaningful option. What is required is data which tracks **both** the behaviour of students and their pattern of interaction with their families over the duration of their four year university career and even beyond. A "tracking" system has recently been established at the University of Guelph (Ontario, Canada) which permits the integration of a range of information concerning every undergraduate student (taken from the Registrar's Office and from our own student surveys) from just prior to university entrance to two years after graduation. The result is an interactive database useful for a variety of research purposes. Changes are now in train which will allow the inclusion of data concerning graduate students. The objectives of the tracking system are as follows (Hollings & Pettigrew, 1987):

1. To establish a database which accumulates personal and academic history on all students as they proceed through university;
2. To provide the capacity to build on the established database by including survey results on individual student records;
3. To track individual students as they progress through their university career;
4. To provide a means of assessing and describing population characteristics and trends; and,
5. To facilitate drawing simple or stratified random samples from the population.

At present, only pilot efforts have been made to assess students' family systems. This sort of data collection package, including methods of obtaining family data, are needed across North America if researchers and theorists can ever hope to meaningfully select between competing claims concerning the respective developmental impact of university environments and family systems. The same applies to arguments concerning causal direction, that is, do family processes produce developmental change in student offspring?, do students' experience of university life produce changes in their families of birth and/or marriage?, or are the two processes in fact reciprocal, with each contributing to developmental change in the other?

Research methods in family study in general and developmental theory in particular remain problematic. There are no simple shortcuts or formula solutions. They will have to be developed or adapted as problems arise. There are, however, a small number of exemplary studies of university populations whose authors have blazed a trail all of us may wish to follow.

Practice.

Finally, recognition of the influence of family systems on student development is directly relevant to the daily practices of a range student service professionals. In what follows, I strive to capture the essence of that relevance with some general remarks. Next, having commented throughout this paper on the practice implications of a family perspective, I return to each of the six practice areas identified above in order to make a number of final observations.

General Remarks. At present, the majority of student service practitioners operate within the aegis of a traditional interpretation of student development theory. At its heart, this supports an individual orientation which focuses attention on students seen one at a time, independent of context, and with respect to events and processes centred on the university campus.

In this sense, change to a family orientation involves a radical shift in perspective. I suggest that this perspective involves at least **six** major components: **sensitivity, congruence, information, skill, differentiation, and ethics.**

Sensitivity refers to the need to expand practitioners' conceptual horizon so as to include events and processes beyond the confines of the university campus. Obviously, this will include the influence of family processes, but may also involve other environments as well. This rests on an assumption fully in keeping with traditional development theory, namely, the need to be concerned with and respond to the "whole" student. The thrust of the present review is that "whole" students are never simply encompassed by their envelope of skin. Rather, they are always defined by some larger set of contextual facets, one of which will typically include some set of family others. This suggests that to treat students "as if" they were all there were is to seriously distort the "whole" and thus, inadvertently, do student clients a disservice, in rare cases, up to and including iatrogenesis (ie., harm).

Congruence recognizes, first, that the family and the university are two different systems, each with its own interests and objectives, and, second, that student development will be best served when both systems are moving in the same direction. Of course, the opposite also applies: when family and university systems move in different directions, it is likely that student development will, to varying degrees, suffer in consequence. Given that both systems ostensibly have the best interests of students at heart, it follows that it is in the interests of both to ensure that congruence between them obtains, at least most of the time. In turn, this means that: (1) university-based practitioners must recognize family systems as relevant; (2) must strive to enunciate their position on a range of issues; (3) must establish and maintain open lines of communication with families; and, (4) must be prepared to negotiate with them should signs of divergence emerge. This is not to suggest that either can force the other to change; rather, the autonomy of both deserves respect. This also recognizes that some areas of divergence may be intractable, unfortunately with the students in question often placed under stress as a result. But what appears crucial is that family and university systems cannot **not** have some sort of relationship given their mutual involvement with students. It remains for both systems to decide what sort of relationship this will be and how it will evolve: consciously, through planned change, or randomly, as each strives (and fails) to operate in splendid isolation.

Information calls attention to the fact that practitioners must base their day-to-day practice decisions on some information base. At present, most of the data reviewed above is simply not available in the higher education literature. My call for sensitivity to family systems can only fall on deaf ears so long as that remains the case. In part, that was the reason this review was prepared in the first place. But it has, I hope, also served to identify those areas of knowledge that practitioners need in future to learn something about if they are to serve students to the best of their ability. At present, the information base regarding students, and especially their families, is at best poor and at worst nonexistent. To accumulate that information will, as I have previously noted, require concerted effort and the commitment of significant resources. In the absence of such information, the implications of a family perspective for practitioners become moot; even normally resourceful practitioners cannot be expected to operate in the dark.

Skill is the complement of information. As practitioners, once information is in place, it must be accompanied by the appropriate skills if it is ever to be translated into practical action. This suggests that genuine acceptance of a family perspective must be associated with appropriate professional development whose aim would be to provide practitioners with those family-related skills they now lack.

Differentiation calls attention to a salient fact about university populations: like the families from which they spring, students do not constitute a unitary population, but rather involve a wide range of subgroups. This means that any programmatic initiatives will also be relevant for only some proportion of the student body, never all of it. In turn, this implies the need for programming which is targeted on well defined subgroups, a strategy in keeping with student development theory, but which robs universities of economies of scale.

Recruitment of student subgroups to specific programs calls attention to the final notion, that of ethics. On the one hand, from an ethical perspective, family involvement can be called in question. What right have universities to move beyond their immediate mandate to provide service to students? Were they to strive to change some state or relationship which did not previously exist, this argument might carry some weight. As this review reveals, however, student involvement in family systems exists prior to university attendance and continues following graduation. It is a fact which universities can neither deny nor alter. To suggest, therefore, that efforts at student development can and should proceed "as if" family systems do not exist is not an ethical argument; it is a fantasy. On the other, one might argue that university students, as adults, have the right to refuse the university any efforts which move in the direction of family involvement. This is a more serious contention, but with only some merit. It is true that as adults students should be consulted in matters which concern their families. And it is also reasonable that they should have the right to withhold consent in specific matters where they are directly concerned, for example, with regard to information concerning their academic performance. But, as this review reveals, it is also true that events and processes at the university do effect, sometimes very seriously, the families in question. From this perspective, families have rights too, independent of their student offspring. Universities have as much of an ethical obligation to respect the rights of families as they do to respect the rights of students, and, indeed, as they do to

make claims concerning their own institutional rights. Recognition of the reality of this triangular arrangement is, in the light of the preceding review, an ethical position that strikes me as entirely defensible. Certainly, it is one that deserves far more discussion across North America than it is now receiving.

In the light of these notions, let me turn to brief final consideration of the six practice areas noted above.

Admissions. Among their various concerns, admissions staff have a vested interest in ensuring the persistence of students who attend their institution. Much of the thinking in this area centres on the notion of "involvement" in which various programmatic strategies are used to encourage student academic and social integration. One such strategy overlaps with curriculum planning in the form of a non-credit "Introductory 101" course designed to help freshman orient to the university.

It is here that the importance of a family perspective becomes apparent. I have commented favourably about orientation efforts directed towards parents, albeit arguing for the inclusion of parent-centred as well as child-centred information. This approach to orientation would explicitly recognize the reciprocal character of the process of university attendance. However, by definition, this applies **both** to parents and to their student offspring. This suggests that orientation efforts with students similarly contain information regarding parents (and siblings) or, to be more precise, the reciprocal impact of university attendance on both parents and students.

As far as I am aware, this approach to student orientation is inconsistent with many such efforts now in place across North America. These tend to focus exclusively on students' concerns vis-a-vis the university and what they may experience there. In accord with this review, such efforts, while well intentioned, fail to recognize "whole" students as they exist in reality. As such, student-centred orientation programs serve students less well than they might otherwise do.

Curriculum Planning. Curriculum planning that is guided by student development theories has a number of objectives, among then efforts to encourage and support such things as maturity, independence and critical thinking. One way these ends may be achieved is through course content. The other is more centred on teaching practices in the classroom. In this section, I will be more concerned with the latter than the former.

In this context, this review calls attention to significant differences in the way in which men and women have been socialized prior to their arrival at university. In turn, such differences may speak to the need for systematic variation in teaching practices on the basis of gender, at least with respect to specific subgroups within the freshman population.

For example, the review indicates that many adolescents women compared to men will have a closer, more dependent relationship with one or both parents. These women will also be more sensitive to emotional distress in significant others and will report lower academic aspiration. Where these attributes apply, freshman classes involving large classroom size and impersonal relations with faculty may place them at a developmental disadvantage when compared either to men or even to other women who may have been socialized differently.

If what we have learned about families hold in the classroom, then freshman women with the above characteristics will respond best when classroom size is small and the amount of contact with faculty - as with their parents - is high. In my own experience teaching family dynamics in small groups to third year students, women were much more likely to become emotionally involved with other group members than their male counterparts whose approach was typically more task oriented. As important, many commented that this was the first course in their entire undergraduate career in which a professor not only recognized them by name, but actually came to know them as a people. Even five years after the fact, I have been approached by these students for letters of recommendation because I was "the only person who knows me". When applied to freshman, the impact of close contact with peers and faculty on student development may be significant.

This approach to teaching is subject to various objections. My anecdotal evidence may or may not generalize to a larger population; empirical data is required to determine whether the hypothesized gender differences do apply and would be responsive to divergent teaching styles. Sensitivity to gender differences may be beyond the fiscal resources of some institutions, identification of subgroups through screening may be seen as stigmatizing, it remains unclear whether courses taught in this way would be made available to all or only some, as an option or mandatorily, and some may argue that the thrust of modern teaching has been to treat everyone as equal and thus escape distinctions based on gender. While I agree that equal treatment is, in principle, desirable, the evidence clearly suggests that some who attend university are significantly more equal than others. Special status has thus been accorded disadvantaged groups who require additional support if they are to benefit from the university experience. This review suggests that precisely the same reasoning may apply to various subgroups within the "normal" population, with gender differences one basis for extending special assistance to some subgroups.

Residence Life. Residence life staff, to the extent that they are influenced by student development theory, tend to see the residence as more than merely a place to live. Rather, they tend to conceive of it as one more opportunity to assist in student development. To that end, residence life programs are commonplace across North America.

Here too a family orientation may be instructive. Let me offer two illustrative examples. The first concerns the transitional stresses associated with moving away from home for the first time. For some, this posses no problem. For others, especially those whose relationship with parents, siblings and peers may have been an especially close one, that move can be traumatic. Rather than dealing with such trauma on an individual basis, some universities have developed programs from a family orientation. A case in point is reported by Valdes and McPherson (1987) who run a "family of origin" group for students at the University of Houston. They report that "these groups became highly cohesive, trusting, and self-disclosing in the initial sessions" and "behaved like a family, assigning mother and father roles to the male and female co-leaders and sibling roles to themselves". Evaluation revealed that group members came to have "a more realistic and accepting view of self and family, a lowering of expectations of how the family "should" be, an increased ability to see parents as adults and to see

themselves as adults in relation to parents, and a realization that the family had changed over the years without their awareness." In my view, it is significant that while these results are consistent with a developmental concern with maturation, it was achieved through the lens of a family orientation.

The second example is merely a possibility which would involve carrying the work of Valdes and McPherson (1987) one step further. This would conceptualize the residence as a community comprised, as is true of most communities, of both individuals and families. For those willing to do so, multi-person residence rooms could be seen as family analogues, that is, as pretend families, with all of the expectations of cooperation and compromise that one would associate with a real family. Groupings might be assembled using the matching procedure I alluded to earlier and their on-going operation regularly assessed, with resource people available for consultation as needed.

Returning to the family course I noted earlier, the extent to which highly realistic family processes evolved, both positive and negative, was quite extraordinary. These students typically met only twice a week and were not matched in any way. Yet, extremely cohesive groups were the norm, with self-disclosure and mutual involvement outside of class both commonplace. For the majority, this was an extremely fruitful experience, with significant developmental consequences, often not apparent until some time until after the course was over. As an experiment in residence life, the use of family analogues may well prove equally revealing and facilitative.

Vocational/Placement Counselling. Both vocational and placement counsellors strive to match students with jobs or at least job interests. Their approach has traditionally been oriented towards each individual student. The review makes clear that this assessment and counselling strategy may be shortsighted, for in most cases family systems significantly influence vocational aspiration and selection.

If correct, this insight has at least two major implications for the professionals in question. The first involves a conceptual shift in which these professional routinely include family events and processes in their assessment and counselling efforts with students.

However, such efforts point to the second implication, namely, the need for professional development in order to help counsellors acquire the additional skills involved. At present, a wide range of family-based instruments are available. Traditionally, these have been more the province of family therapists than vocational and placement staff. Yet, there appears to be good reason to think that training vocational and placement staff in the use of such instruments may extend their ability to be of assistance to student clients.

Consider the case in which students seem unable to commit to a vocational direction in university. At the freshman level, this may be expected as students test out their interests against substantive experience. But, as time passes, the need to make a definitive choice becomes ever more urgent. Vocational counselling may be called for, but again without success. Traditionally, answers may be sought in personality dispositions. This review suggests that an alternative explanation may originate with family processes that have heretofore been outside their purview. The result may be referral to personal counselling followed by return for vocational assistance, now with an increased likelihood of a positive outcome.

Note, however, that this example is meaningful in two senses. On the one hand, it calls attention to the immediate rewards which may accrue to vocational and placement staff who acquire the new skills which would underpin a family orientation. On the other hand, it calls attention to the systemic character of student service divisions per se, that is, various components are intended to interact, with each available to provide assistance to any other. However, the scenario presented above would be reasonable if and only if the shift to a family orientation involved the entire division; piecemeal re-orientation will ensure ultimate failure, since division components can no longer communicate effectively.

Personal Counselling. Like vocational and placement staff, the shift by personal counsellors to a family orientation would involve both conceptual change coupled with professional development aimed at specialized training in some variant of family therapy (see Minuchin & Fishman, 1981; Bross, 1983). As noted above, this is not to suggest that the presenting problems of students clients are always rooted in family processes. However, a sufficient proportion are to warrant inclusion of these new treatment skills in these counsellors' repertoire, for use as needed. However, the utility of these techniques is not limited to treatment settings alone. A case in point concerns stress management programs now found in many universities across North America. At present, such programs typically operate from an individual orientation. Whether given students enter the program with a specific stress-related complaint or merely wish to increase their capacity to cope with stress, it is assumed that deficits in stress management are located within the individual.

In a sense, this is literally true. Stress and its management is very much a function of individual perception; the same event experienced by one individual as trivial may be seen by another as a source of extreme stress. In another sense, however, this view is false, for the lens through which stress is perceived does not typically originate with the individual, but rather with the family system of which each student is a member. Indeed, this is often doubly true, for not only are stress management strategies family-based (Reiss, 1981), but the family itself is the single major source of stress among students (see above and Benjamin, 1986).

This suggests that stress management programs which ignore family processes may be significantly less successful than they might otherwise be. In turn, the shift to a family orientation would require considerable change, both in program components as well as in requisite clinical skills.

CONCLUSION

Among higher education theorists, researchers and practitioners, student development theory has gradually acquired a preeminent status. This is so much the case that critical evaluation of the theory now comes close to heresy; having worked so hard to acquire its major tenets and their associated practice skills, its proponents are loath to give it up or even consider amending the theory.

Nothing in the present review suggests that student development theory be abandoned; it continues to have much that is of great theoretical and practical value. By the same token, however,

data reviewed above suggests that significant amendment is required, especially as regards the potent developmental influence of family systems. These influences pre-date university attendance, continue throughout the university career and extend into the postgraduation period, at which time both the families of birth and that of marriage will often apply. If correct, revision in keeping with a family orientation would hold a variety of important implications for theory, research and practice in higher education.

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[8] *For technical reasons, there was about a one year delay between the completion of this monograph and its publication. During this interval, I have continued to accumulate bibliographic material which links family processes and student development. I include this additional material here for the benefit of readers who may which to extend their coverage of particular topics.*

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